

which function as sensing receptor units is described in U.S. Patent No. 5,512,490 to Walt et al., which is incorporated by reference as if set forth herein. Walt appears to describe the use of covalently attached polymeric "cones" which are grown via photopolymerization onto the distal face of fiber optic bundles. These sensor probes appear to be designed with the goal of obtaining unique, continuous, and reproducible responses from small localized regions of dye-doped polymer. The polymer appears to serve as a solid support for indicator molecules that provide information about test solutions through changes in optical properties. These polymer supported sensors have been used for the detection of analytes such as pH, metals, and specific biological entities. Methods for manufacturing large numbers of reproducible sensors, however, has yet to be developed. Moreover, no methods for acquisitions of data streams in a simultaneous manner are commercially available with this system.

Optical alignment issues may also be problematic for these systems.

A method of rapid sample analysis for use in the diagnostic microbiology field is also desirable. The techniques now used for rapid microbiology diagnostics detect either antigens or nucleic acids. Rapid antigen testing is based on the use of antibodies to recognize either the single cell organism or the presence of infected cell material. Inherent to this approach is the need to obtain and characterize the binding of the antibody to unique structures on the organism being tested. Since the identification and isolation of the appropriate antibodies is time consuming, these techniques are limited to a single agent per testing module and there is no opportunity to evaluate the amount of agent present.

Most antibody methods are relatively insensitive and require the presence of 10^5 to 10^7 organisms. The response time of antibody-antigen reactions in diagnostic tests of this type ranges from 10 to 120 minutes, depending on the method of detection. The fastest methods are generally agglutination reactions, but these methods are less sensitive due to difficulties in visual interpretation of the reactions. Approaches with slower reaction times include antigen recognition by antibody conjugated to either an enzyme or chromophore. These test types tend to be more sensitive, especially when spectrophotometric methods are used to determine if an antigen-antibody reaction has occurred. These detection schemes do not, however, appear to allow the simultaneous detection of multiple analytes on a single detector platform.

The alternative to antigen detection is the detection of nucleic acids. An approach for diagnostic testing with nucleic acids uses hybridization to target unique regions of the target organism. These techniques require fewer organisms (10^3 to 10^5), but require about five hours to complete. As with antibody-antigen reactions this approach has not been developed for the simultaneous detection of multiple analytes.

The most recent improvement in the detection of microorganisms has been the use of nucleic acid amplification. Nucleic acid amplification tests have been developed that generate both qualitative and quantitative data. However, the current limitations of these testing methods are related to delays caused by specimen preparation, amplification, and detection. Currently, the standard assays require about five hours to complete. The ability to complete much faster detection for a variety of microorganisms would be of tremendous importance to military intelligence, national safety, medical, environmental, and food areas.

It is therefore desirable that new sensors capable of discriminating different analytes, toxins, and bacteria be developed for medical/clinical diagnostic, environmental, health and safety, remote sensing, military, food/beverage, and chemical processing applications. It is further desired that the sensing system be adaptable to

the simultaneous detection of a variety of analytes to improve throughput during various chemical and biological analytical procedures.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

5 Herein we describe a system and method for the analysis of a fluid containing one or more analytes. The system may be used for either liquid or gaseous fluids. The system, in some embodiments, may generate patterns that are diagnostic for both the individual analytes and mixtures of the analytes. The system in some embodiments, is made of a plurality of chemically sensitive particles, formed in an ordered array, capable of simultaneously detecting many different kinds of analytes rapidly. An aspect of the system is that the array may be formed using a
10 microfabrication process, thus allowing the system to be manufactured in an inexpensive manner.

 In an embodiment of a system for detecting analytes, the system, in some embodiments, includes a light source, a sensor array, and a detector. The sensor array, in some embodiments, is formed of a supporting member which is configured to hold a variety of chemically sensitive particles (herein referred to as "particles") in an ordered array. The particles are, in some embodiments, elements which will create a detectable signal in the presence of an
15 analyte. The particles may produce optical (e.g., absorbance or reflectance) or fluorescence/phosphorescent signals upon exposure to an analyte. Examples of particles include, but are not limited to functionalized polymeric beads, agarous beads, dextrose beads, polyacrylamide beads, control pore glass beads, metal oxides particles (e.g., silicon dioxide (SiO_2) or aluminum oxides (Al_2O_3)), polymer thin films, metal quantum particles (e.g., silver, gold, platinum, etc.), and semiconductor quantum particles (e.g., Si, Ge, GaAs, etc.). A detector (e.g., a charge-coupled
20 device "CCD") in one embodiment is positioned below the sensor array to allow for the data acquisition. In another embodiment, the detector may be positioned above the sensor array to allow for data acquisition from reflectance of the light off of the particles.

 Light originating from the light source may pass through the sensor array and out through the bottom side of the sensor array. Light modulated by the particles may pass through the sensor array and onto the proximally
25 spaced detector. Evaluation of the optical changes may be completed by visual inspection or by use of a CCD detector by itself or in combination with an optical microscope. A microprocessor may be coupled to the CCD detector or the microscope. A fluid delivery system may be coupled to the supporting member of the sensor array. The fluid delivery system, in some embodiments, is configured to introduce samples into and out of the sensor array.

30 In an embodiment, the sensor array system includes an array of particles. The particles may include a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric bead. The receptors, in some embodiments, are chosen for interacting with analytes. This interaction may take the form of a binding/association of the receptors with the analytes. The supporting member may be made of any material capable of supporting the particles, while allowing the passage of the appropriate wavelengths of light. The supporting member may include a plurality of cavities. The cavities may
35 be formed such that at least one particle is substantially contained within the cavity.

 In an embodiment, the optical detector may be integrated within the bottom of the supporting member, rather than using a separate detecting device. The optical detectors may be coupled to a microprocessor to allow evaluation of fluids without the use of separate detecting components. Additionally, a fluid delivery system may

also be incorporated into the supporting member. Integration of detectors and a fluid delivery system into the supporting member may allow the formation of a compact and portable analyte sensing system.

A high sensitivity CCD array may be used to measure changes in optical characteristics which occur upon binding of the biological/chemical agents. The CCD arrays may be interfaced with filters, light sources, fluid delivery and micromachined particle receptacles, so as to create a functional sensor array. Data acquisition and handling may be performed with existing CCD technology. CCD detectors may be configured to measure white light, ultraviolet light or fluorescence. Other detectors such as photomultiplier tubes, charge induction devices, photo diodes, photodiode arrays, and microchannel plates may also be used.

A particle, in some embodiments, possess both the ability to bind the analyte of interest and to create a modulated signal. The particle may include receptor molecules which possess the ability to bind the analyte of interest and to create a modulated signal. Alternatively, the particle may include receptor molecules and indicators. The receptor molecule may possess the ability to bind to an analyte of interest. Upon binding the analyte of interest, the receptor molecule may cause the indicator molecule to produce the modulated signal. The receptor molecules may be naturally occurring or synthetic receptors formed by rational design or combinatorial methods. Some examples of natural receptors include, but are not limited to, DNA, RNA, proteins, enzymes, oligopeptides, antigens, and antibodies. Either natural or synthetic receptors may be chosen for their ability to bind to the analyte molecules in a specific manner.

In one embodiment, a naturally occurring or synthetic receptor is bound to a polymeric bead in order to create the particle. The particle, in some embodiments, is capable of both binding the analyte(s) of interest and creating a detectable signal. In some embodiments, the particle will create an optical signal when bound to an analyte of interest.

A variety of natural and synthetic receptors may be used. The synthetic receptors may come from a variety of classes including, but not limited to, polynucleotides (e.g., aptamers), peptides (e.g., enzymes and antibodies), synthetic receptors, polymeric unnatural biopolymers (e.g., polythioureas, polyguanidiniums), and imprinted polymers. Polynucleotides are relatively small fragments of DNA which may be derived by sequentially building the DNA sequence. Peptides include natural peptides such as antibodies or enzymes or may be synthesized from amino acids. Unnatural biopolymers are chemical structure which are based on natural biopolymers, but which are built from unnatural linking units. For example, polythioureas and polyguanidiniums have a structure similar to peptides, but may be synthesized from diamines (i.e., compounds which include at least two amine functional groups) rather than amino acids. Synthetic receptors are designed organic or inorganic structures capable of binding various analytes.

In an embodiment, a large number of chemical/biological agents of interest to the military and civilian communities may be sensed readily by the described array sensors. Bacteria may also be detected using a similar system. To detect, sense, and identify intact bacteria, the cell surface of one bacteria may be differentiated from other bacteria, or genomic material may be detected using oligonucleic receptors. One method of accomplishing this differentiation is to target cell surface oligosaccharides (i.e., sugar residues). The use of synthetic receptors which are specific for oligosaccharides may be used to determine the presence of specific bacteria by analyzing for cell surface oligosaccharides.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above brief description as well as further objects, features and advantages of the methods and apparatus of the present invention will be more fully appreciated by reference to the following detailed description of presently preferred but nonetheless illustrative embodiments in accordance with the present invention when

5 taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 depicts a schematic of an analyte detection system;

FIG. 2 depicts a particle disposed in a cavity;

FIG. 3 depicts a sensor array;

FIG. 4A-F depicts the formation of a Fabry-Perot cavity on the back of a sensor array;

10 FIG. 5 depicts the chemical constituents of a particle;

FIG. 6 depicts the chemical formulas of some receptor compounds;

FIG. 7 depicts a plot of the absorbance of green light vs. concentration of calcium (Ca^{+2}) for a particle which includes an o-cresolphthalein complexone receptor;

15 FIG. 8 depicts a schematic view of the transfer of energy from a first indicator to a second indicator in the presence of an analyte;

FIG. 9 depicts a schematic of the interaction of a sugar molecule with a boronic acid based receptor.

FIG. 10 depicts various synthetic receptors;

FIG. 11 depicts a synthetic pathway for the synthesis of polythioureas;

FIG. 12 depicts a synthetic pathway for the synthesis of polyguanidiniums;

20 FIG. 13 depicts a synthetic pathway for the synthesis of diamines from amino acids;

FIG. 14 depicts fluorescent diamino monomers;

FIG. 15 depicts a plot of counts/sec. (i.e., intensity) vs. time as the pH of a solution surrounding a particle coupled to o-cresolphthalein is cycled from acidic to basic conditions;

25 FIG. 16 depicts the color responses of a variety of sensing particles to solutions of Ca^{+2} and various pH levels;

FIG. 17 depicts an analyte detection system which includes a sensor array disposed within a chamber;

FIG. 18 depicts an integrated analyte detection system;

FIG. 19 depicts a cross-sectional view of a cavity covered by a mesh cover;

FIG. 20 depicts a top view of a cavity covered by a mesh cover;

30 FIG. 21A-G depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a sensor array which includes a removable top and bottom cover;

FIG. 22A-G depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a sensor array which includes a removable top and a stationary bottom cover;

35 FIG. 23A-G depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a sensor array which includes a removable top;

FIG. 24A-D depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based sensor array which includes a top and bottom cover with openings aligned with the cavity;

FIG. 25A-D depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a photoresist based sensor array which includes a top and bottom cover with openings aligned with the cavity;

FIG. 26A-E depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a plastic based sensor array which includes a top and bottom cover with openings aligned with the cavity;

FIG. 27A-D depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based sensor array which includes a top cover with openings aligned with the cavity and a tapered cavity;

5 FIG. 28A-E depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a photoresist based sensor array which includes a top cover with openings aligned with the cavity and a tapered cavity;

FIG. 29A-E depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a photoresist based sensor array which includes a top cover with openings aligned with the cavity and a bottom cover;

10 FIG. 30A-D depicts a cross-sectional view of a series of processing steps for the formation of a plastic based sensor array which includes a top cover with openings aligned with the cavity and a bottom cover;

FIG. 31 depicts a cross-sectional view of a schematic of a micropump;

FIG. 32 depicts a top view of an electrohydrodynamic pump;

FIG. 33 depicts a cross-sectional view of a sensor array which includes a micropump;

15 FIG. 34 depicts a cross-sectional view of a sensor array which includes a micropump and channels which are coupled to the cavities;

FIG. 35 depicts a cross-sectional view of a sensor array which includes multiple micropumps each micropump being coupled to a cavity;

FIG. 36 depicts a top view of a sensor array which includes multiple electrohydrodynamic pumps;

20 FIG. 37 depicts a cross-sectional view of a sensor array which includes a system for delivering a reagent from a reagent particle to a sensing cavity.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Herein we describe a system and method for the simultaneous analysis of a fluid containing multiple analytes. The system may be used for either liquid or gaseous fluids. The system may generate patterns that are
25 diagnostic for both individual analytes and mixtures of the analytes. The system, in some embodiments, is made of a combination of chemically sensitive particles, formed in an ordered array, capable of simultaneously detecting many different kinds of analytes rapidly. An aspect of the system is that the array may be formed using a microfabrication process, thus allowing the system to be manufactured in an inexpensive manner.

SYSTEM FOR ANALYSIS OF ANALYTES

30 Shown in FIG. 1 is an embodiment of a system for detecting analytes in a fluid. The system, in some embodiments, includes a light source 110, a sensor array 120 and a detector 130. The light source 110 may be a white light source or light emitting diodes (LED). In one embodiment, light source 110 may be a blue light emitting diode (LED) for use in systems relying on changes in fluorescence signals. For colorimetric (e.g., absorbance) based
35 systems, a white light source may be used. The sensor array 120, in some embodiments, is formed of a supporting member which is configured to hold a variety of particles 124. A detecting device 130 (e.g., a charge-coupled device "CCD") may be positioned below the sensor array to allow for data acquisition. In another embodiment, the detecting device 130 may be positioned above the sensor array.

Light originating from the light source 110, in some embodiments, passes through the sensor array 120 and out through the bottom side of the sensor array. The supporting member and the particles together, in some embodiments, provide an assembly whose optical properties are well matched for spectral analyses. Thus, light modulated by the particles may pass through the sensor array and onto the proximally spaced detector 130.

5 Evaluation of the optical changes may be completed by visual inspection (e.g., with a microscope) or by use of a microprocessor 140 coupled to the detector. For fluorescence measurements, a filter 135 may be placed between supporting member 120 and detector 130 to remove the excitation wavelength. A fluid delivery system 160 may be coupled to the supporting member. The fluid delivery system 160 may be configured to introduce samples into and out of the sensor array.

10 In an embodiment, the sensor array system includes an array of particles. Upon the surface and within the interior region of the particles are, in some embodiments, located a variety of receptors for interacting with analytes. The supporting member, in some embodiments, is used to localize these particles as well as to serve as a microenvironment in which the chemical assays can be performed. For the chemical/biological agent sensor arrays, the particles used for analysis are about 0.05 - 500 microns in diameter, and may actually change size (e.g., swell or
15 shrink) when the chemical environment changes. Typically, these changes occur when the array system is exposed to the fluid stream which includes the analytes. For example, a fluid stream which comprises a non-polar solvent, may cause non-polar particles to change in volume when the particles are exposed to the solvent. To accommodate these changes, it is preferred that the supporting member consist of an array of cavities which serve as micro test-tubes.

20 The supporting member may be made of any material capable of supporting the particles, while allowing the passage of the appropriate wavelength of light. The supporting member is also made of a material substantially impervious to the fluid in which the analyte is present. A variety of materials may be used including plastics, glass, silicon based materials (e.g., silicon, silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, etc.) and metals. In one embodiment, the supporting member includes a plurality of cavities. The cavities may be formed such that at least one particle is
25 substantially contained within the cavity. Alternatively, a plurality of particles may be contained within a single cavity.

In an embodiment, the supporting member may consist of a strip of plastic which is substantially transparent to the wavelength of light necessary for detection. A series of cavities may be formed within the strip. The cavities may be configured to hold at least one particle. The particles may be contained within the strip by a
30 transparent cover which is configured to allow passage of the analyte containing fluid into the cavities.

In another embodiment, the supporting member may be formed using a silicon wafer as depicted in FIG. 2. The silicon wafer 210 may include a substantially transparent layer 220 formed on the bottom surface of the wafer. The cavities 230, in one embodiment, are formed by an anisotropic etch process of the silicon wafer. In one embodiment, anisotropic etching of the silicon wafer is accomplished using a wet hydroxide etch.
35 Photolithographic techniques may be used to define the locations of the cavities. The cavities may be formed such that the sidewalls of the cavities are substantially tapered at an angle of between about 50 to 60 degrees. Formation of such angled cavities may be accomplished by wet anisotropic etching of <100> silicon. The term "<100> silicon" refers to the crystal orientation of the silicon wafer. Other types of silicon, (e.g., <110> and <111> silicon) may lead to steeper angled sidewalls. For example, <111> silicon may lead to sidewalls formed at about 90

degrees. The angled sides of the cavities in some embodiments, serve as "mirror layers" which may improve the light collection efficiency of the cavities. The etch process may be controlled so that the formed cavities extend through the silicon wafer to the upper surface of transparent layer 220. While depicted as pyramidal, the cavities may be formed in a number of shapes including but not limited to, spherical, oval, cubic, or rectangular. An advantage to using a silicon wafer for the support member, is that the silicon material is substantially opaque to the light produced from the light source. Thus, the light may be inhibited from passing from one cavity to adjacent cavities. In this manner, light from one cavity may be inhibited from influencing the spectroscopic changes produced in an adjacent cavity.

The silicon wafer, in some embodiments, has an area of approximately 1 cm^2 to about 100 cm^2 and includes about 10^1 to about 10^6 cavities. In an embodiment, about 100 cavities are formed in a ten by ten matrix. The center to center distance between the cavities, in some embodiments, is about 500 microns. Each of the cavities may include at least one particle.

The transparent layer 220 may serve as a window, allowing light of a variety of wavelengths to pass through the cavities 230 and to the detector. Additionally, the transparent layer may serve as a platform onto which the individual particles 235 may be positioned. The transparent layer may be formed of silicon dioxide (SiO_2), silicon nitride (Si_3N_4) or silicon dioxide/silicon nitride multi-layer stacks. The transparent layer, in some embodiments, is deposited onto the silicon wafer prior to the formation of the cavities.

The cavities 230 may be sized to substantially contain a particle 235. The cavities are, in some embodiments, larger than a particle. The cavities are, in some embodiments, sized to allow facile placement and removal of the particle within the cavities. The cavity may be substantially larger than the particle, thus allowing the particle to swell during use. For example, a particle may have a size as depicted in FIG. 2 by particle 235. During use, contact with a fluid (e.g., a solvent) may cause the particle to swell, for example, to a size depicted as circle 236. In some embodiments, the cavity is sized to allow such swelling of the particle during use. A particle may be positioned at the bottom of a cavity using, e.g., a micromanipulator. After a particle has been placed within the cavity, a transparent cover plate 240 may be placed on top of the supporting member to keep the particle in place.

When forming an array which includes a plurality of particles, the particles may be placed in the array in an ordered fashion using the micromanipulator. In this manner, a ordered array having a predefined configuration of particles may be formed. Alternatively, the particles may be randomly placed within the cavities. The array may subsequently undergo a calibration test to determine the identity of the particle at any specified location in the supporting member.

The transparent cover plate 240, in some embodiments, is coupled to the upper surface of the silicon wafer 220 such that the particles are inhibited from becoming dislodged from the cavity. The transparent cover plate, in some embodiments, is positioned a fixed distance above the silicon wafer, as depicted in FIG. 2, to keep the particle in place, while allowing the entrance of fluids into the cavities. The transparent cover plate, in some embodiments, is positioned at a distance above the substrate which is substantially less than a width of the particle. The transparent cover plate may be made of any material which is substantially transparent to the wavelength of light being utilized by the detector. The transparent cover plate may be made of plastic, glass, quartz, or silicon dioxide/silicon nitride.

In one embodiment, the transparent cover plate 240, is a thin sheet of glass (e.g., a microscope slide cover slip). The slide may be positioned a fixed distance above the silicon wafer. Support structures 241 (See FIG. 2) may be placed upon the silicon wafer 210 to position the transparent cover plate 240. The support structures may be formed from a polymer or a silicon based material. In another embodiment, a polymeric substrate is coupled to the silicon wafer to form the support structures 241 for the transparent cover plate 240. In an embodiment, a plastic material with an adhesive backing (e.g., cellophane tape) is positioned on the silicon wafer 210. After the support structures 241 are placed on the wafer the transparent cover plate 240 is placed upon the support structures. The support structures inhibit the transparent cover sheet from contacting the silicon wafer 200. In this manner, a channel is formed between the silicon wafer and the transparent cover plate which allow the fluid to pass into the cavity, while inhibiting displacement of the particle by the fluid.

In another embodiment, the transparent cover plate 240 may be fastened to the upper surface of the silicon wafer, as depicted in FIG. 3. In this embodiment, the fluid may be inhibited from entering the cavities 230 by the transparent cover plate 240. To allow passage of the fluid into the cavities, a number of channels 250 may be formed in the silicon wafer. The channels, in one embodiment, are oriented to allow passage of the fluid into substantially all of the cavities. When contacted with the fluid, the particles may swell to a size which may plug the channels. To prevent this plugging, the channels may be formed near the upper portion of the cavities, as depicted in FIG 3. The channels, in one embodiment, are formed using standard photolithographic masking to define the regions where the trenches are to be formed, followed by the use of standard etching techniques. A depth of the cavity may be such that the particle resides substantially below the position of the channel. In this way, the plugging of the channels due to swelling of the particle may be prevented.

The inner surfaces of the cavities may be coated with a material to aid the positioning of the particles within the cavities. In one embodiment, a thin layer of gold or silver may be used to line the inner surface of the cavities. The gold or silver layer may act as an anchoring surface to anchor particles (e.g., via alkylthiol bonding). In addition, the gold or silver layer may also increase the reflectivity of the inner surface of the cavities. The increased reflectance of the surface may enhance the analyte detection sensitivity of the system. Alternatively, polymer layers and self-assembled monolayers formed upon the inner surface of the cavities may be used to control the particle adhesion interactions. Additional chemical anchoring methods may be used for silicon surfaces such as those based on siloxane type reagents, which may be attached to Si-OH functionalities. Similarly, monomeric and polymeric reagents attached to an interior region of the cavities can be used to alter the local wetting characteristics of the cavities. This type of methodology can be used to anchor the particles as well as to alter the fluid delivery characteristics of the cavity. Furthermore, amplification of the signals for the analytes may be accomplished with this type of strategy by causing preconcentration of appropriate analytes in the appropriate type of chemical environment.

In another embodiment, the optical detector may be integrated within the bottom transparent layer 220 of the supporting member, rather than using a separate detecting device. The optical detectors may be formed using a semiconductor-based photodetector 255. The optical detectors may be coupled to a microprocessor to allow evaluation of fluids without the use of separate detecting components. Additionally, the fluid delivery system may also be incorporated into the supporting member. Micro-pumps and micro-valves may also be incorporated into the silicon wafer to aid passage of the fluid through the cavities. Integration of detectors and a fluid delivery system

into the supporting member may allow the formation of a compact and portable analyte sensing system. Optical filters may also be integrated into the bottom membrane of the cavities. These filters may prevent short wavelength excitation from producing "false" signals in the optical detection system (e.g., a CCD detector array) during fluorescence measurements.

5 A sensing cavity may be formed on the bottom surface of the support substrate. An example of a sensing cavity that may be used is a Fabry-Perot type cavity. Fabry-Perot cavity-based sensors may be used to detect changes in optical path length induced by either a change in the refractive index or a change in physical length of the cavity. Using micromachining techniques, Fabry-Perot sensors may be formed on the bottom surface of the cavity.

10 Figures 4A-F depict a sequence of processing steps for the formation of a cavity and a planar top diaphragm Fabry-Perot sensor on the bottom surface of a silicon based supporting member. A sacrificial barrier layer 262a/b is deposited upon both sides of a silicon supporting member 260. The silicon supporting member 260 may be a double-side polished silicon wafer having a thickness ranging from about 100 μm to about 500 μm , preferably from about 200 μm to about 400 μm , and more preferably of about 300 μm . The barrier layer 262a/b may be composed of silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or silicon oxynitride. In one embodiment, the barrier layer 15 262a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials. As depicted in FIG 4A, the barrier layer 262 a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials which includes a silicon nitride layer 271a/b and a silicon dioxide layer 272a/b. Both layers may be deposited using a low pressure chemical vapor deposition ("LPCVD") process. Silicon nitride may be deposited using an LPCVD reactor by reaction of ammonia (NH_3) and dichlorosilane (SiCl_2H_2) at a gas 20 flow rate of about 3.5:1, a temperature of about 800 $^\circ\text{C}$, and a pressure of about 220 mTorr. The silicon nitride layer 271a/b is deposited to a thickness in the range from about 100 \AA to about 500 \AA , preferably from 200 \AA to about 400 \AA , and more preferably of about 300 \AA . Silicon dioxide is may be deposited using an LPCVD reactor by reaction of silane (SiH_4) and oxygen (O_2) at a gas flow rate of about 3:4, a temperature of about 450 $^\circ\text{C}$, and a 25 pressure of about 110 mTorr. The silicon dioxide layer 272a/b is deposited to a thickness in the range from about 3000 \AA to about 7000 \AA , preferably from 4000 \AA to about 6000 \AA , and more preferably of about 5000 \AA . The front face silicon dioxide layer 272a, in one embodiment, acts as the main barrier layer. The underlying silicon nitride layer 271a acts as an intermediate barrier layer to inhibit overetching of the main barrier layer during subsequent KOH wet anisotropic etching steps.

A bottom diaphragm layer 264a/b is deposited upon the barrier layer 262a/b on both sides of the 30 supporting member 260. The bottom diaphragm layer 264a/b may be composed of silicon nitride, silicon dioxide, or silicon oxynitride. In one embodiment, the bottom diaphragm layer 264 a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials. As depicted in FIG 4A, the bottom diaphragm layer 264a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials which includes a pair of silicon nitride layers 273a/b and 275a/b surrounding a silicon dioxide layer 274a/b. All of the layers may be deposited using an LPCVD process. The silicon nitride layers 273a/b and 275a/b have a 35 thickness in the range from about 500 \AA to about 1000 \AA , preferably from 700 \AA to about 800 \AA , and more preferably of about 750 \AA . The silicon dioxide layer 274a/b has a thickness in the range from about 3000 \AA to about 7000 \AA , preferably from 4000 \AA to about 6000 \AA , and more preferably of about 4500 \AA .

A cavity which will hold the particle may now be formed in the supporting member 260. The bottom diaphragm layer 264b and the barrier layer 262b formed on the back side 261 of the silicon supporting member 260

are patterned and etched using standard photolithographic techniques. In one embodiment, the layers are subjected to a plasma etch process. The plasma etching of silicon dioxide and silicon nitride may be performed using a mixture of carbontetrafluoride (CF_4) and oxygen (O_2). The patterned back side layers 262b and 264b may be used as a mask for anisotropic etching of the silicon supporting member 260. The silicon supporting member 260, in one embodiment, is anisotropically etched with a 40% potassium hydroxide ("KOH") solution at 80°C to form the cavity. The etch is stopped when the front side silicon nitride layer 271a is reached, as depicted in FIG 4B. The silicon nitride layer 271a inhibits etching of the main barrier layer 272a during this etch process. The cavity 267 may be formed extending through the supporting member 260. After formation of the cavity, the remaining portions of the back side barrier layer 262b and the diaphragm layer 264b may be removed.

Etch windows 266 are formed through the bottom diaphragm layer 264a on the front side of the wafer. A masking layer (not shown) is formed over the bottom diaphragm layer 264a and patterned using standard photolithographic techniques. Using the masking layer, etch windows 266 may be formed using a plasma etch. The plasma etching of silicon dioxide and silicon nitride may be performed using a mixture of carbontetrafluoride (CF_4) and oxygen (O_2). The etching is continued through the bottom diaphragm layer 264a and partially into the barrier layer 262a. In one embodiment, the etching is stopped at approximately half the thickness of the barrier layer 262a. Thus, when the barrier layer 262a is subsequently removed the etch windows 266 will extend through the bottom diaphragm layer 264a, communicating with the cavity 267. By stopping the etching at a midpoint of the barrier layer, voids or discontinuities may be reduced since the bottom diaphragm is still continuous due to the remaining barrier layer.

After the etch windows 266 are formed, a sacrificial spacer layer 268a/b is deposited upon the bottom diaphragm layer 264a and within cavity 267, as depicted in FIG. 4C. The spacer layer may be formed from LPCVD polysilicon. In one embodiment, the front side deposited spacer layer 268a will also at least partially fill the etch windows 266. Polysilicon may be deposited using an LPCVD reactor using silane (SiH_4) at a temperature of about 650°C . The spacer layer 268a/b is deposited to a thickness in the range from about 4000 \AA to about $10,000\text{ \AA}$, preferably from 6000 \AA to about 8000 \AA , and more preferably of about 7000 \AA . The preferred thickness of the spacer layer 268a is dependent on the desired thickness of the internal air cavity of the Fabry-Perot detector. For example, if a Fabry-Perot detector which is to include a 7000 \AA air cavity between the top and bottom diaphragm layer is desired, a spacer layer having a thickness of about 7000 \AA would be formed. After the spacer layer has been deposited, a masking layer for etching the spacer layer 268a (not shown) is used to define the etch regions of the spacer layer 268a. The etching may be performed using a composition of nitric acid (HNO_3), water, and hydrogen fluoride (HF) in a ratio of 25:13:1, respectively, by volume. The lateral size of the subsequently formed cavity is determined by the masking pattern used to define the etch regions of the spacer layer 268a.

After the spacer layer 268a has been etched, the top diaphragm layer 270a/b is formed. The top diaphragm 270a/b, in one embodiment, is deposited upon the spacer layer 268a/b on both sides of the supporting member. The top diaphragm 270a/b may be composed of silicon nitride, silicon dioxide, or silicon oxynitride. In one embodiment, the top diaphragm 270a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials. As depicted in FIG. 4C, the top diaphragm 270a/b is composed of a stack of dielectric materials which includes a pair of silicon nitride layers 283a/b and 285a/b surrounding a silicon dioxide layer 284a/b. All of the layers may be deposited using an LPCVD process. The silicon nitride layers 283a/b and 285a/b have a thickness in the range from about 1000 \AA to about

2000 Å, preferably from 1200 Å to about 1700 Å, and more preferably of about 1500 Å. The silicon dioxide layer 284a/b has a thickness in the range from about 5000 Å to about 15,500 Å, preferably from 7500 Å to about 12,000 Å, and more preferably of about 10,500 Å.

After depositing the top diaphragm 270a/b, all of the layers stacked on the bottom face of the supporting member (e.g., layers 268b, 283b, 284b, and 285b) are removed by multiple wet and plasma etching steps, as depicted in FIG. 4D. After these layers are removed, the now exposed portions of the barrier layer 262a are also removed. This exposes the spacer layer 268a which is present in the etch windows 266. The spacer layer 268 may be removed from between the top diaphragm 270a and the bottom diaphragm 264a by a wet etch using a KOH solution, as depicted in FIG. 4D. Removal of the spacer material 268a, forms a cavity 286 between the top diaphragm layer 270a and the bottom diaphragm layer 264a. After removal of the spacer material, the cavity 286 may be washed using deionized water, followed by isopropyl alcohol to clean out any remaining etching solution.

The cavity 286 of the Fabry-Perot sensor may be filled with a sensing substrate 290, as depicted in FIG. 4E. To coat the cavity 286 with a sensing substrate 290, the sensing substrate may be dissolved in a solvent. A solution of the sensing substrate is applied to the supporting member 260. The solution is believed to rapidly enter the cavity 286 through the etched windows 266 in the bottom diaphragm 264a, aided in part by capillary action. As the solvent evaporates, a thin film of the sensing substrate 290 coats the inner walls of the cavity 286, as well as the outer surface of the bottom diaphragm 264a. By repeated treatment of the supporting member with the solution of the sensing substrate, the thickness of the sensing substrate may be varied.

In one embodiment, the sensing substrate 290 is poly(3-dodecylthiophene) whose optical properties change in response to changes in oxidation states. The sensing substrate poly(3-dodecylthiophene) may be dissolved in a solvent such as chloroform or xylene. In one embodiment, a concentration of about 0.1 g of poly(3-dodecylthiophene)/mL is used. Application of the solution of poly(3-dodecylthiophene) to the supporting member causes a thin film of poly(3-dodecylthiophene) to be formed on the inner surface of the cavity.

In some instances, the sensing substrate, when deposited within a cavity of a Fabry-Perot type detector, may cause stress in the top diaphragm of the detector. It is believed that when a sensing polymer coats a planar top diaphragm, extra residual stress on the top diaphragm causes the diaphragm to become deflected toward the bottom diaphragm. If the deflection becomes too severe, sticking between the top and bottom diaphragms may occur. In one embodiment, this stress may be relieved by the use of supporting members 292 formed within the cavity 286, as depicted in FIG. 4F. The supporting members 292 may be formed without any extra processing steps to the above described process flow. The formation of supporting members may be accomplished by deliberately leaving a portion of the spacer layer within the cavity. This may be accomplished by underetching the spacer layer (e.g., terminating the etch process before the entire etch process is finished). The remaining spacer will behave as a support member to reduce the deflection of the top diaphragm member. The size and shape of the support members may be adjusted by altering the etch time of the spacer layer, or adjusting the shape of the etch windows 266.

In another embodiment, a high sensitivity CCD array may be used to measure changes in optical characteristics which occur upon binding of the biological/chemical agents. The CCD arrays may be interfaced with filters, light sources, fluid delivery and micromachined particle receptacles, so as to create a functional sensor array. Data acquisition and handling may be performed with existing CCD technology. Data streams (e.g., red, green, blue for colorimetric assays; gray intensity for fluorescence assays) may be transferred from the CCD to a

computer via a data acquisition board. Current CCDs may allow for read-out rates of 10^5 pixels per second. Thus, the entire array of particles may be evaluated hundreds of times per second allowing for studies of the dynamics of the various host-guest interaction rates as well as the analyte/polymer diffusional characteristics. Evaluation of this data may offer a method of identifying and quantifying the chemical/biological composition of the test samples.

5 CCD detectors may be configured to measure white light, ultraviolet light or fluorescence. Other detectors such as photomultiplier tubes, charge induction devices, photodiode, photodiode arrays, and microchannel plates may also be used. It should be understood that while the detector is depicted as being positioned under the supporting member, the detector may also be positioned above the supporting member. It should also be understood that the detector typically includes a sensing element for detecting the spectroscopic events and a component for displaying

10 the detected events. The display component may be physically separated from the sensing element. The sensing element may be positioned above or below the sensor array while the display component is positioned close to a user.

In one embodiment, a CCD detector may be used to record color changes of the chemical sensitive particles during analysis. As depicted in FIG. 1, a CCD detector 130 may be placed beneath the supporting member 120. The light transmitted through the cavities is captured and analyzed by the CCD detector. In one

15 embodiment, the light is broken down into three color components, red, green and blue. To simplify the data, each color is recorded using 8 bits of data. Thus, the data for each of the colors will appear as a value between 0 and 255. The color of each chemical sensitive element may be represented as a red, blue and green value. For example, a blank particle (i.e., a particle which does not include a receptor) will typically appear white. For

20 example, when broken down into the red, green and blue components, it is found that a typical blank particle exhibits a red value of about 253, a green value of about 250, and a blue value of about 222. This signifies that a blank particle does not significantly absorb red, green or blue light. When a particle with a receptor is scanned, the particle may exhibit a color change, due to absorbance by the receptor. For example, it was found that when a particle which includes a 5-carboxyfluorescein receptor is subjected to white light, the particle shows a strong

25 absorbance of blue light. The CCD detector values for the 5-carboxyfluorescein particle exhibits a red value of about 254, a green value of about 218, and a blue value of about 57. The decrease in transmittance of blue light is believed to be due to the absorbance of blue light by the 5-carboxyfluorescein. In this manner, the color changes of a particle may be quantitatively characterized. An advantage of using a CCD detector to monitor the color changes is that color changes which may not be noticeable to the human eye may now be detected.

30 The support array may be configured to allow a variety of detection modes to be practiced. In one embodiment, a light source is used to generate light which is directed toward the particles. The particles may absorb a portion of the light as the light illuminates the particles. The light then reaches the detector, reduced in intensity by the absorbance of the particles. The detector may be configured to measure the reduction in light intensity (i.e., the absorbance) due to the particles. In another embodiment, the detector may be placed above the

35 supporting member. The detector may be configured to measure the amount of light reflected off of the particles. The absorbance of light by the particles is manifested by a reduction in the amount of light being reflected from the cavity. The light source in either embodiment may be a white light source or a fluorescent light source.

CHEMICALLY SENSITIVE PARTICLES

A particle, in some embodiments, possess both the ability to bind the analyte of interest and to create a modulated signal. The particle may include receptor molecules which possess the ability to bind the analyte of interest and to create a modulated signal. Alternatively, the particle may include receptor molecules and indicators.

- 5 The receptor molecule may possess the ability to bind to an analyte of interest. Upon binding the analyte of interest, the receptor molecule may cause the indicator molecule to produce the modulated signal. The receptor molecules may be naturally occurring or synthetic receptors formed by rational design or combinatorial methods. Some examples of natural receptors include, but are not limited to, DNA, RNA, proteins, enzymes, oligopeptides, antigens, and antibodies. Either natural or synthetic receptors may be chosen for their ability to bind to the analyte
- 10 molecules in a specific manner. The forces which drive association/recognition between molecules include the hydrophobic effect, anion-cation attraction, and hydrogen bonding. The relative strengths of these forces depend upon factors such as the solvent dielectric properties, the shape of the host molecule, and how it complements the guest. Upon host-guest association, attractive interactions occur and the molecules stick together. The most widely used analogy for this chemical interaction is that of a "lock and key". The fit of the key molecule (the guest) into
- 15 the lock (the host) is a molecular recognition event.

- A naturally occurring or synthetic receptor may be bound to a polymeric resin in order to create the particle. The polymeric resin may be made from a variety of polymers including, but not limited to, agarous, dextrose, acrylamide, control pore glass beads, polystyrene-polyethylene glycol resin, polystyrene-divinyl benzene resin, formylpolystyrene resin, trityl-polystyrene resin, acetyl polystyrene resin, chloroacetyl polystyrene resin,
- 20 aminomethyl polystyrene-divinylbenzene resin, carboxypolystyrene resin, chloromethylated polystyrene-divinylbenzene resin, hydroxymethyl polystyrene-divinylbenzene resin, 2-chlorotrityl chloride polystyrene resin, 4-benzyloxy-2,4'-dimethoxybenzhydrol resin (Rink Acid resin), triphenyl methanol polystyrene resin, diphenylmethanol resin, benzhydrol resin, succinimidyl carbonate resin, p-nitrophenyl carbonate resin, imidazole carbonate resin, polyacrylamide resin, 4-sulfamylbenzoyl-4'-methylbenzhydramine-resin (Safety-catch resin), 2-amino-2-(2'-nitrophenyl) propionic acid-aminomethyl resin (ANP Resin), p-benzyloxybenzyl alcohol-
- 25 divinylbenzene resin (Wang resin), p-methylbenzhydramine-divinylbenzene resin (MBHA resin), Fmoc-2,4-dimethoxy-4'-(carboxymethyloxy)-benzhydramine linked to resin (Knorr resin), 4-(2',4'-Dimethoxyphenyl)-Fmoc-aminomethyl)-phenoxy resin (Rink resin), 4-hydroxymethyl-benzoyl-4'-methylbenzhydramine resin (HMBA-MBHA Resin), p-nitrobenzophenone oxime resin (Kaiser oxime resin), and amino-2,4-dimethoxy-4'-(carboxymethyloxy)-benzhydramine handle linked to 2-chlorotrityl resin (Knorr-2-chlorotrityl resin). In one
- 30 embodiment, the material used to form the polymeric resin is compatible with the solvent in which the analyte is dissolved. For example, polystyrene-divinyl benzene resin will swell within non-polar solvents, but does not significantly swell within polar solvents. Thus, polystyrene-divinyl benzene resin may be used for the analysis of analytes within non-polar solvents. Alternatively, polystyrene-polyethylene glycol resin will swell with polar
- 35 solvents such as water. Polystyrene-polyethylene glycol resin may be useful for the analysis of aqueous fluids.

In one embodiment, a polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene material is used to form the polymeric resin. The polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene resin is formed from a mixture of polystyrene 375, divinyl benzene 380 and polystyrene-polyethylene glycol 385, see FIG. 5. The polyethylene glycol portion of the polystyrene-polyethylene glycol 385, in one embodiment, may be terminated with an amine.

The amine serves as a chemical handle to anchor both receptors and indicator dyes. Other chemical functional groups may be positioned at the terminal end of the polyethylene glycol to allow appropriate coupling of the polymeric resin to the receptor molecules or indicators.

5 The chemically sensitive particle, in one embodiment, is capable of both binding the analyte(s) of interest and creating a detectable signal. In one embodiment, the particle will create an optical signal when bound to an analyte of interest. The use of such a polymeric bound receptors offers advantages both in terms of cost and configurability. Instead of having to synthesize or attach a receptor directly to a supporting member, the polymeric bound receptors may be synthesized *en masse* and distributed to multiple different supporting members. This allows the cost of the sensor array, a major hurdle to the development of mass-produced environmental probes and
10 medical diagnostics, to be reduced. Additionally, sensor arrays which incorporate polymeric bound receptors may be reconfigured much more quickly than array systems in which the receptor is attached directly to the supporting member. For example, if a new variant of a pathogen or a pathogen that contains a genetically engineered protein is a threat, then a new sensor array system may be readily created to detect these modified analytes by simply adding new sensor elements (e.g., polymeric bound receptors) to a previously formed supporting member.

15 In one embodiment, a receptor, which is sensitive to changes in the pH of a fluid sample is bound to a polymeric resin to create a particle. That is, the receptor is sensitive to the concentration of hydrogen cations (H^+). The receptor in this case is typically sensitive to the concentration of H^+ in a fluid solution. The analyte of interest may therefore be H^+ . There are many types of molecules which undergo a color change when the pH of the fluid is changed. For example, many types of dyes undergo significant color changes as the pH of the fluid medium is
20 altered. Examples of receptors which may be used to monitor the pH of a fluid sample include 5-carboxyfluorescein and alizarin complexone, depicted in FIG. 6. Each of these receptors undergoes significant color changes as the pH of the fluid is altered. 5-carboxyfluorescein undergoes a change from yellow to orange as the pH of the fluid is increased. Alizarin complexone undergoes two color changes, first from yellow to red, then from red to blue as the pH of the fluid increases. By monitoring the change in color caused by dyes attached to a
25 polymeric particle, the pH of a solution may be qualitatively and, with the use of a detector (e.g., a CCD detector), quantitatively monitored.

In another embodiment, a receptor which is sensitive to presence of metal cations is bound to a polymeric particle to create a particle. The receptor in this case is typically sensitive to the concentration of one or more metal cations present in a fluid solution. In general, colored molecules which will bind cations may be used to determine
30 the presence of a metal cation in a fluid solution. Examples of receptors which may be used to monitor the presence of cations in a fluid sample include alizarin complexone and *o*-cresolphthalein complexone, see FIG. 6. Each of these receptors undergoes significant color changes as the concentration of a specific metal ion in the fluid is altered. Alizarin complexone is particularly sensitive to lanthanum ions. In the absence of lanthanum, alizarin complexone will exhibit a yellow color. As the concentration of lanthanum is increased, alizarin complexone will
35 change to a red color. *o*-Cresolphthalein complexone is particularly sensitive to calcium ions. In the absence of calcium, *o*-cresolphthalein complexone is colorless. As the concentration of calcium is increased, *o*-cresolphthalein complexone will change to a blue color. By monitoring the change in color of metal cation sensitive receptors attached to a polymeric particle, the presence of a specific metal ion may be qualitatively and, with the use of a detector (e.g., a CCD detector), quantitatively monitored.

Referring to FIG. 7, a graph of the absorbance of green light vs. concentration of calcium (Ca^{+2}) is depicted for a particle which includes an *o*-cresolphthalein complexone receptor. As the concentration of calcium is increased, the absorbance of green light increases in a linear manner up to a concentration of about 0.0006 M. A concentration of 0.0006 M is the solubility limit of calcium in the fluid, thus no significant change in absorbance is noted after this point. The linear relationship between concentration and absorbance allows the concentration of calcium to be determined by measuring the absorbance of the fluid sample.

In one embodiment, a detectable signal may be caused by the altering of the physical properties of an indicator ligand bound to the receptor or the polymeric resin. In one embodiment, two different indicators are attached to a receptor or the polymeric resin. When an analyte is captured by the receptor, the physical distance between the two indicators may be altered such that a change in the spectroscopic properties of the indicators is produced. A variety of fluorescent and phosphorescent indicators may be used for this sensing scheme. This process, known as Forster energy transfer, is extremely sensitive to small changes in the distance between the indicator molecules.

For example, a first fluorescent indicator 320 (e.g., a fluorescein derivative) and a second fluorescent indicator 330 (e.g., a rhodamine derivative) may be attached to a receptor 300, as depicted in FIG. 8. When no analyte is present short wavelength excitation 310 may excite the first fluorescent indicator 320, which fluoresces as indicated by 312. The short wavelength excitation, however, may cause little or no fluorescence of the second fluorescent indicator 330. After binding of analyte 350 to the receptor, a structural change in the receptor molecule may bring the first and second fluorescent indicators closer to each other. This change in intermolecular distance may allow the excited first indicator 320 to transfer a portion of its fluorescent energy 325 to the second fluorescent indicator 330. This transfer in energy may be measured by either a drop in energy of the fluorescence of the first indicator molecule 320, or the detection of increased fluorescence 314 by the second indicator molecule 330.

Alternatively, the first and second fluorescent indicators may initially be positioned such that short wavelength excitation, may cause fluorescence of both the first and second fluorescent indicators, as described above. After binding of analyte 350 to the receptor, a structural change in the receptor molecule may cause the first and second fluorescent indicators to move further apart. This change in intermolecular distance may inhibit the transfer of fluorescent energy from the first indicator 320 to the second fluorescent indicator 330. This change in the transfer of energy may be measured by either a drop in energy of the fluorescence of the second indicator molecule 330, or the detection of increased fluorescence by the first indicator molecule 320.

In another embodiment, an indicator ligand may be preloaded onto the receptor. An analyte may then displace the indicator ligand to produce a change in the spectroscopic properties of the particles. In this case, the initial background absorbance is relatively large and decreases when the analyte is present. The indicator ligand, in one embodiment, has a variety of spectroscopic properties which may be measured. These spectroscopic properties include, but are not limited to, ultraviolet absorption, visible absorption, infrared absorption, fluorescence, and magnetic resonance. In one embodiment, the indicator is a dye having either a strong fluorescence, a strong ultraviolet absorption, a strong visible absorption, or a combination of these physical properties. Examples of indicators include, but are not limited to, carboxyfluorescein, ethidium bromide, 7-dimethylamino-4-methylcoumarin, 7-diethylamino-4-methylcoumarin, eosin, erythrosin, fluorescein, Oregon Green 488, pyrene, Rhodamine Red, tetramethylrhodamine, Texas Red, Methyl Violet, Crystal Violet, Ethyl Violet, Malachite green,

Methyl Green, Alizarin Red S, Methyl Red, Neutral Red, *o*-cresolsulfonephthalein, *o*-cresolphthalein, phenolphthalein, Acridine Orange, *B*-naphthol, coumarin, and *a*-naphthionic acid. When the indicator is mixed with the receptor, the receptor and indicator interact with each other such that the above mentioned spectroscopic properties of the indicator, as well as other spectroscopic properties may be altered. The nature of this interaction may be a binding interaction, wherein the indicator and receptor are attracted to each other with a sufficient force to allow the newly formed receptor-indicator complex to function as a single unit. The binding of the indicator and receptor to each other may take the form of a covalent bond, an ionic bond, a hydrogen bond, a van der Waals interaction, or a combination of these bonds.

The indicator may be chosen such that the binding strength of the indicator to the receptor is less than the binding strength of the analyte to the receptor. Thus, in the presence of an analyte, the binding of the indicator with the receptor may be disrupted, releasing the indicator from the receptor. When released, the physical properties of the indicator may be altered from those it exhibited when bound to the receptor. The indicator may revert back to its original structure, thus regaining its original physical properties. For example, if a fluorescent indicator is attached to a particle that includes a receptor, the fluorescence of the particle may be strong before treatment with an analyte containing fluid. When the analyte interacts with the particle, the fluorescent indicator may be released. Release of the indicator may cause a decrease in the fluorescence of the particle, since the particle now has less indicator molecules associated with it.

An example of this type of system is illustrated by the use of a boronic acid substituted resin 505 as a particle. Prior to testing, the boronic acid substituted resin 505 is treated with a sugar 510 which is tagged with an indicator (e.g., resorufin) as depicted in FIG. 9. The sugar 510 binds to the boronic acid receptor 500 imparting a color change to the boronic substituted resin 505 (yellow for the resorufin tagged sugar). When the boronic acid resin 505 is treated with a fluid sample which includes a sugar 520, the tagged sugar 510 may be displaced, causing a decrease in the amount of color produced by the boronic acid substituted resin 505. This decrease may be qualitatively or, with the use of a detector (e.g., a CCD detector), quantitatively monitored.

In another embodiment, a designed synthetic receptor may be used. In one embodiment, a polycarboxylic acid receptor may be attached to a polymeric resin. The polycarboxylic receptors are discussed in U.S. patent application serial no. 08/950,712 which is incorporated herein by reference.

In an embodiment, the analyte molecules in the fluid may be pretreated with an indicator ligand. Pretreatment may involve covalent attachment of an indicator ligand to the analyte molecule. After the indicator has been attached to the analyte, the fluid may be passed over the sensing particles. Interaction of the receptors on the sensing particles with the analytes may remove the analytes from the solution. Since the analytes include an indicator, the spectroscopic properties of the indicator may be passed onto the particle. By analyzing the physical properties of the sensing particles after passage of an analyte stream, the presence and concentration of an analyte may be determined.

For example, the analytes within a fluid may be derivatized with a fluorescent tag before introducing the stream to the particles. As analyte molecules are adsorbed by the particles, the fluorescence of the particles may increase. The presence of a fluorescent signal may be used to determine the presence of a specific analyte. Additionally, the strength of the fluorescence may be used to determine the amount of analyte within the stream.

RECEPTORS

A variety of natural and synthetic receptors may be used. The synthetic receptors may come from a variety of classes including, but not limited to, polynucleotides (e.g., aptamers), peptides (e.g., enzymes and antibodies), synthetic receptors, polymeric unnatural biopolymers (e.g., polythioureas, polyguanidiniums), and imprinted polymers., some of which are generally depicted in FIG. 10. Natural based synthetic receptors include receptors which are structurally similar to naturally occurring molecules. Polynucleotides are relatively small fragments of DNA which may be derived by sequentially building the DNA sequence. Peptides may be synthesized from amino acids. Unnatural biopolymers are chemical structure which are based on natural biopolymers, but which are built from unnatural linking units. Unnatural biopolymers such as polythioureas and polyguanidiniums may be synthesized from diamines (i.e., compounds which include at least two amine functional groups). These molecules are structurally similar to naturally occurring receptors, (e.g., peptides). Some diamines may, in turn, be synthesized from amino acids. The use of amino acids as the building blocks for these compounds allow a wide variety of molecular recognition units to be devised. For example, the twenty natural amino acids have side chains that possess hydrophobic residues, cationic and anionic residues, as well as hydrogen bonding groups. These side chains may provide a good chemical match to bind a large number of targets, from small molecules to large oligosaccharides. Amino acid based peptides, polythioureas, and polyguanidiniums are depicted in FIG. 10.

Techniques for the building of DNA fragments and polypeptide fragments on a polymer particle are well known. Techniques for the immobilization of naturally occurring antibodies and enzymes on a polymeric resin are also well known. The synthesis of polythioureas upon a resin particle may be accomplished by the synthetic pathway depicted in FIG. 11. The procedure may begin by deprotection of the terminal tBoc protecting group on an amino acid coupled to a polymeric particle. Removal of the protecting group is followed by coupling of the rigid spacer 410 to the resulting amine 405 using diisopropylcarbodiimide (DIC) and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole hydrate (HOBT). The spacer group may inhibit formation of a thiazolone by reaction of the first amino acids with subsequently formed thioureas. After the spacer group is coupled to the amino acid, another tBoc deprotection is performed to remove the spacer protecting group, giving the amine 415. At this point, monomer may be added incrementally to the growing chain, each time followed by a tBoc deprotection. The addition of a derivative of the diamine 420 (e.g., an isothiocyanate) to amine 415 gives the mono-thiourea 425. The addition of a second thiourea substituent is also depicted. After the addition of the desired number of monomers, a solution of benzylisothiocyanate or acetic anhydride may be added to cap any remaining amines on the growing oligomers. Between 1 to 20 thioureas groups may be formed to produce a synthetic polythiourea receptor.

The synthesis of polyguanidiniums may be accomplished as depicted in FIG. 12. In order to incorporate these guanidinium groups into the receptor, the coupling of a thiourea with a terminal amine in the presence of Mukaiyama's reagent may be utilized. The coupling of the first thiourea diamine 430 with an amino group of a polymeric particle gives the mono-guanidinium 434. Coupling of the resulting mono-guanidinium with a second thiourea diamine 436 gives a di-guanidinium 438. Further coupling may create a tri-guanidinium 440. Between 1 to 20 guanidinium groups may be formed to produce a synthetic polyguanidinium receptor.

The above described methods for making polythioureas and polyguanidiniums are based on the incorporation of diamines (i.e., molecules which include at least two amine functional groups) into the oligomeric

receptor. The method may be general for any compound having at least two amino groups. In one embodiment, the diamine may be derived from amino acids. A method for forming diamines from amino acids is shown in FIG.

13. Treatment of a protected amino acid 450 with borane-THF reduces the carboxylic acid portion of the amino acid to the primary alcohol 452. The primary alcohol is treated with phthalimide under Mitsunobu conditions (PPh₃/DEAD). The resulting compound 454 is treated with aqueous methylamine to form the desired
5 monoprotected diamine 456. The process may be accomplished such that the enantiomeric purity of the starting amino acid is maintained. Any natural or synthetic amino acid may be used in the above described method.

The three coupling strategies used to form the respective functional groups may be completely compatible with each other. The capability to mix linking groups (amides, thioureas, and guanidiniums) as well as the side
10 chains (hydrophobic, cationic, anionic, and hydrogen bonding) may allow the creation of a diversity in the oligomers that is beyond the diversity of receptors typically found with natural biological receptors. Thus, we may produce ultra-sensitive and ultra-selective receptors which exhibit interactions for specific toxins, bacteria, and environmental chemicals. Additionally, these synthetic schemes may be used to build combinatorial libraries of particles for use in the sensor array.

15 In an embodiment, the indicator ligand may be incorporated into synthetic receptors during the synthesis of the receptors. The ligand may be incorporated into a monomeric unit, such as a diamine, that is used during the synthesis of the receptor. In this manner, the indicator may be covalently attached to the receptor in a controlled position. By placing the indicator within the receptor during the synthesis of the receptor, the positioning of the indicator ligand within the receptor may be controlled. This control may be difficult to achieve after synthesis of
20 the receptor is completed.

In one embodiment, a fluorescent group may be incorporated into a diamine monomer for use in the synthetic sequences. Examples of monomeric units which may be used for the synthesis of a receptor are depicted in FIG. 14. The depicted monomers include fluorescent indicator groups. After synthesis, the interaction of the receptor with the analyte may induce changes in the spectroscopic properties of the molecule. Typically, hydrogen
25 bonding or ionic substituents on the fluorescent monomer involved in analyte binding have the capacity to change the electron density and/or rigidity of the fluorescent ring system, thereby causing observable changes in the spectroscopic properties of the indicator. For fluorescent indicators such changes may be exhibited as changes in the fluorescence quantum yield, maximum excitation wavelength, and/or maximum emission wavelength. This approach does not require the dissociation of a preloaded fluorescent ligand, which may be limited in response time
30 by k_{on}). While fluorescent ligands are shown here, it is to be understood that a variety of other ligand may be used including colorimetric ligands.

In another embodiment, two fluorescent monomers for signaling may be used for the synthesis of the receptor. For example, compound 470 (a derivative of fluorescein) and compound 475 (a derivative of rhodamine), depicted in FIG. 14, may both be incorporated into a synthetic receptor. Compound 470 contains a common
35 colorimetric/fluorescent probe that will, in some embodiments, send out a modulated signal upon analyte binding. The modulation may be due to resonance energy transfer to compound 475. When an analyte binds to the receptor, structural changes in the receptor may alter the distance between monomeric units 470 and 475. It is well known that excitation of fluorescein can result in emission from rhodamine when these molecules are oriented correctly. The efficiency of resonance energy transfer from monomers 470 to 475 will depend strongly upon the presence of

analyte binding; thus, measurement of rhodamine fluorescence intensity (at a substantially longer wavelength than fluorescein fluorescence) may serve as an indicator of analyte binding. To greatly improve the likelihood of a modulatory fluorescein-rhodamine interaction, multiple rhodamine tags may be attached at different sites along a receptor molecule without substantially increasing background rhodamine fluorescence (only rhodamine very close to fluorescein will yield appreciable signal). This methodology may be applied to a number of alternate fluorescent pairs.

In an embodiment, a large number of chemical/biological agents of interest to the military and civilian communities may be sensed readily by the described array sensors including both small and medium size molecules. For example, it is known that nerve gases typically produce phosphate structures upon hydrolysis in water. The presence of molecules which contain phosphate functional groups may be detected using polyguanidiniums. Nerve gases which have contaminated water sources may be detected by the use of the polyguanidinium receptors described above.

In order to identify, sense, and quantitate the presence of various bacteria using the proposed micro-machined sensor, two strategies may be used. First, small molecule recognition and detection may be exploited. Since each bacteria possesses a unique and distinctive concentration of the various cellular molecules, such as DNA, proteins, metabolites, and sugars, the fingerprint (i.e., the concentration and types of DNA, proteins, metabolites, and sugars) of each organism is expected to be unique. Hence, the analytes obtained from whole bacteria or broken down bacteria may be used to determine the presence of specific bacteria. A series of receptors specific for DNA molecules, proteins, metabolites, and sugars may be incorporated into an array. A solution containing bacteria, or more preferably broken down bacteria, may be passed over the array of particles. The individual cellular components of the bacteria may interact in a different manner with each of the particles. This interaction will provide a pattern within the array which may be unique for the individual bacteria. In this manner, the presence of bacteria within a fluid may be determined.

In another embodiment, bacteria may be detected as whole entities, as found in ground water, aerosols, or blood. To detect, sense, and identify intact bacteria, the cell surface of one bacteria may be differentiated from other bacteria. One method of accomplishing this differentiation is to target cell surface oligosaccharides (i.e. sugar residues). Each bacterial class (gram negative, gram positive, etc.) displays a different oligosaccharide on their cell surfaces. The oligosaccharide, which is the code that is read by other cells giving an identification of the cell, is part of the cell-cell recognition and communication process. The use of synthetic receptors which are specific for oligosaccharides may be used to determine the presence of specific bacteria by analyzing for the cell surface oligosaccharides.

In another embodiment, the sensor array may be used to optimize which receptor molecules should be used for a specific analyte. An array of receptors may be placed within the cavities of the supporting member and a stream containing an analyte may be passed over the array. The reaction of each portion of the sensing array to the known analyte may be analyzed and the optimal receptor determined by determining which particle, and therefore which receptor, exhibits the strongest reaction toward the analyte. In this manner, a large number of potential receptors may be rapidly scanned. The optimal receptor may then be incorporated into a system used for the detection of the specific analyte in a mixture of analytes.

It should be emphasized that although some particles may be purposefully designed to bind to important species (biological agents, toxins, nerve gasses, etc.), most structures will possess nonspecific receptor groups. One of the advantages associated with the proposed sensor array is the capacity to standardize each array of particles via exposure to various analytes, followed by storage of the patterns which arise from interaction of the analytes with the particles. Therefore, there may not be a need to know the identity of the actual receptor on each particle. Only the characteristic pattern for each array of particles is important. In fact, for many applications it may be less time consuming to place the various particles into their respective holders without taking precautions to characterize the location associated with the specific particles. When used in this manner, each individual sensor array may require standardization for the type of analyte to be studied.

On-site calibration for new or unknown toxins may also be possible with this type of array. Upon complexation of an analyte, the local microenvironment of each indicator may change, resulting in a modulation of the light absorption and/or emission properties. The use of standard pattern recognition algorithms completed on a computer platform may serve as the intelligence factor for the analysis. The "fingerprint" like response evoked from the simultaneous interactions occurring at multiple sites within the substrate may be used to identify the species present in unknown samples.

The above described sensor array system offers a number of distinct advantages over existing technologies. One advantage is that "real time" detection of analytes may be performed. Another advantage is that the simultaneous detection of multiple analytes may be realized. Yet another advantage is that the sensor array system allows the use of synthetic reagents as well as biologically produced reagents. Synthetic reagents typically have superior sensitivity and specificity toward analytes when compared to the biological reagents. Yet another advantage is that the sensor array system may be readily modified by simply changing the particles which are placed within the sensor array. This interchangeability may also reduce production costs.

EXAMPLES

1. The determination of pH using a chemically sensitive particle.

Shown in FIG. 15 is the magnitude of the optical signal transmitted through a single polymer particle derivatized with o-cresolphthalein. Here, a filter is used to focus the analysis on those wavelengths which the dye absorbs most strongly (i.e., about 550 nm). Data is provided for the particle as the pH is cycled between acid and basic environments. In acidic media (i.e., at times of 100-150 seconds and 180-210 seconds), the particle is clear and the system yields large signals (up to greater than 300,000 counts) at the optical detector. Between times of 0-100 and 150-180 seconds, the solution was made basic. Upon raising the pH (i.e., making the solution more basic), the particle turns purple in color and the transmitted green light is greatly diminished. Large signal reductions are recorded under such circumstances. The evolution of the signal changes show that the response time is quite rapid, on the order of 10 seconds. Furthermore, the behavior is highly reproducible.

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2. The simultaneous detection of Ca^{+2} , Ce^{+3} , and pH by a sensor array system.

The synthesis of four different particles was accomplished by coupling a variety of indicator ligands to a polyethylene glycol-polystyrene ("PEG-PS") resin particle. The PEG-PS resin particles were obtained from Novabiochem Corp., La Jolla, Ca. The particles have an average diameter of about 130 μm when dry and about

250 μm when wet. The indicator ligands of fluorescein, *o*-cresolphthalein complexone, and alizarin complexone were each attached to PEG-PS resin particles using a dicyclohexylcarbodiimide (DCC) coupling between a terminal resin bound amine and a carboxylic acid on the indicator ligand.

These synthetic receptors, localized on the PEG-PS resin to create sensing particles, were positioned within micromachined wells formed in silicon/silicon nitride wafers, thus confining the particles to individually addressable positions on a multicomponent chip. These wells were sized to hold the particles in both swollen and unswollen states. Rapid introduction of the test fluids can be accomplished using these structures while allowing spectrophotometric assays to probe for the presence of analytes. For the identification and quantification of analyte species, changes in the light absorption and light emission properties of the immobilized resin particles can be exploited, although only identification based upon absorption properties are discussed here. Upon exposure to analytes, color changes for the particles were found to be 90% complete within one minute of exposure, although typically only seconds were required. To make the analysis of the colorimetric changes efficient, rapid, and sensitive, a charge-coupled-device (CCD) was directly interfaced with the sensor array. Thus, data streams composed of red, green, and blue (RGB) light intensities were acquired and processed for each of the individual particle elements. The red, blue, and green responses of the particles to various solutions are graphically depicted in FIG. 16.

The true power of the described bead sensor array occurs when simultaneous evaluation of multiple chemically distinct bead structures is completed. A demonstration of the capacity of five different beads is provided in FIG. 16. In this case, blank, alizarin, *o*-cresol phthalein, fluorescein, and alizarin- Ce^{3+} complex derivatized beads serve as a matrix for subtle differentiation of chemical environments. The blank bead is simply a polystyrene sphere with no chemical derivatization. The bead derivatized with *o*-cresolphthalein responds to Ca^{+2} at pHs values around 10.0. The binding of calcium is noted from the large green color attenuation noted for this dye while exposed to the cation. Similarly, the fluorescein derivatized bead acts as a pH sensor. At pHs below 7.4 it is light yellow, but at higher pHs it turns dark orange. Interesting, the alizarin complexone plays three distinct roles. First, it acts as a proton sensor yielding a yellow color at pHs below 4.5, orange is noted at pHs between 4.5 and 11.5, and at pHs above 11.5 a blue hue is observed. Second, it functions as a sensor for lanthanum ions at lower pHs by turning yellow to orange. Third, the combination of both fluoride and lanthanum ions results in yellow/orange coloration.

The analysis of solutions containing various amount of Ca^{+2} or F^- at various pH levels was performed using alizarin complexone, *o*-cresolphthalein complexone, 5-carboxy fluorescein, and alizarin- Ce^{3+} complex. A blank particle in which the terminal amines of a PEG-PS resin particle have been acylated was also used. In this example, the presence of Ca^{+2} (0.1 M $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$) was analyzed under conditions of varying pH. The pH was varied to values of 2, 7, and 12, all buffered by a mixture of 0.04 M phosphate, 0.04 M acetate, and 0.04 M borate. The RGB patterns for each sensor element in all environments were measured. The bead derivatized with *o*-cresolphthalein responds to Ca^{+2} at pH values around 12. Similarly, the 5-carboxy fluorescein derivatized bead acts as a pH sensor. At pHs below 7.4 it is light yellow, but at higher pHs it turns dark orange. Interesting, the alizarin complexone plays three distinct roles. First, it acts as a proton sensor yielding a yellow color at pHs below 4.5, orange is noted at pHs between 4.5 and 11.5, and at pHs above 11.5 a blue hue is observed. Second, it functions as

a sensor for lanthanum ions at lower pHs by turning yellow to orange. Third, the combination of both fluoride and lanthanum ions results in yellow/orange coloration.

This example demonstrates a number of important factors related to the design, testing, and functionality of micromachined array sensors for solution analyses. First, derivatization of polymer particles with both colorimetric and fluorescent dyes was completed. These structures were shown to respond to pH and Ca^{2+} . Second, response times well under 1 minute were found. Third, micromachined arrays suitable both for confinement of particles, as well as optical characterization of the particles, have been prepared. Fourth, integration of the test bed arrays with commercially available CCD detectors has been accomplished. Finally, simultaneous detection of several analytes in a mixture was made possible by analysis of the RGB color patterns created by the sensor array.

3. The detection of sugar molecules using a boronic acid based receptor.

A series of receptors were prepared with functionalities that associate strongly with sugar molecules, as depicted in FIG. 9. In this case, a boronic acid sugar receptor 500 was utilized to demonstrate the functionality of a new type of sensing scheme in which competitive displacement of a resorufin derivatized galactose sugar molecule was used to assess the presence (or lack thereof) of other sugar molecules. The boronic acid receptor 500 was formed via a substitution reaction of a benzylic bromide. The boronic acid receptor was attached to a polyethylene glycol-polystyrene ("PEG-PS") resin particle at the "R" position. Initially, the boronic acid derivatized particle was loaded with resorufin derivatized galactose 510. Upon exposure of the particle to a solution containing glucose 520, the resorufin derivatized galactose molecules 510 are displaced from the particle receptor sites. Visual inspection of the optical photographs taken before and after exposure to the sugar solution show that the boron substituted resin is capable of sequestering sugar molecules from an aqueous solution. Moreover, the subsequent exposure of the colored particles to a solution of a non-tagged sugar (e.g., glucose) leads to a displacement of the bound colored sugar reporter molecule. Displacement of this molecule leads to a change in the color of the particle. The sugar sensor turns from dark orange to yellow in solutions containing glucose. The particles were also tested in conditions of varying pH. It was noted that the color of the particles changes from dark orange to yellow as the pH is varied from low pH to high pH.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Shown in FIG. 17 is an embodiment of a system for detecting analytes in a fluid. In one embodiment, the system includes a light source 512, a sensor array 522, a chamber 550 for supporting the sensor array and a detector 530. The sensor array 522 may include a supporting member which is configured to hold a variety of particles. In one embodiment, light originating from the light source 512 passes through the sensor array 522 and out through the bottom side of the sensor array. Light modulated by the particles may be detected by a proximally spaced detector 530. While depicted as being positioned below the sensor array, it should be understood that the detector may be positioned above the sensor array for reflectance measurements. Evaluation of the optical changes may be completed by visual inspection (e.g., by eye, or with the aid of a microscope) or by use of a microprocessor 540 coupled to the detector.

In this embodiment, the sensor array 522 is positioned within a chamber 550. The chamber 550, may be configured to allow a fluid stream to pass through the chamber such that the fluid stream interacts with the sensor array 522. The chamber may be constructed of glass (e.g., borosilicate glass or quartz) or a plastic material which is transparent to a portion of the light from the light source. If a plastic material is used, the plastic material should also be substantially unreactive toward the fluid. Examples of plastic materials which may be used to form the chamber include, but are not limited to, acrylic resins, polycarbonates, polyester resins, polyethylenes, polyimides, polyvinyl polymers (e.g., polyvinyl chloride, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl dichloride, polyvinyl fluoride, etc.), polystyrenes, polypropylenes, polytetrafluoroethylenes, and polyurethanes. An example of such a chamber is a Sykes-Moore chamber, which is commercially available from Belco Glass, Inc., in New Jersey. Chamber 550, in one embodiment, includes a fluid inlet port 552 and a fluid outlet port 554. The fluid inlet 552 and outlet 554 ports are configured to allow a fluid stream to pass into the interior 556 of the chamber during use. The inlet and outlet ports may be configured to allow facile placement of a conduit for transferring the fluid to the chamber. In one embodiment, the ports may be hollow conduits. The hollow conduits may be configured to have an outer diameter which is substantially equal to the inner diameter of a tube for transferring the fluid to or away from the chamber. For example, if a plastic or rubber tube is used for the transfer of the fluid, the internal diameter of the plastic tube is substantially equal to the outer diameter of the inlet and outlet ports.

In another embodiment, the inlet and outlet ports may be Luer lock style connectors. Preferably, the inlet and outlet ports are female Luer lock connectors. The use of female Luer lock connectors will allow the fluid to be introduced via a syringe. Typically, syringes include a male Luer lock connector at the dispensing end of the syringe. For the introduction of liquid samples, the use of Luer lock connectors may allow samples to be transferred directly from a syringe to the chamber 550. Luer lock connectors may also allow plastic or rubber tubing to be connected to the chamber using Luer lock tubing connectors.

The chamber may be configured to allow the passage of a fluid sample to be substantially confined to the interior 556 of the chamber. By confining the fluid to a small interior volume, the amount of fluid required for an analysis may be minimized. The interior volume may be specifically modified for the desired application. For example, for the analysis of small volumes of fluid samples, the chamber may be designed to have a small interior chamber, thus reducing the amount of fluid needed to fill the chamber. For larger samples, a larger interior chamber may be used. Larger chambers may allow a faster throughput of the fluid during use.

In another embodiment, depicted in FIG. 18, a system for detecting analytes in a fluid includes a light source 512, a sensor array 522, a chamber 550 for supporting the sensor array and a detector 530, all enclosed within a detection system enclosure 560. As described above, the sensor array 522 is preferably formed of a supporting member which is configured to hold a variety of particles. Thus, in a single enclosure, all of the components of an analyte detection system are included.

The formation of an analyte detection system in a single enclosure may allow the formation of a portable detection system. For example, a small controller 570 may be coupled to the analyte detection system. The controller 570 may be configured to interact with the detector and display the results from the analysis. In one embodiment, the controller includes a display device 572 for displaying information to a user. The controller may also include input devices 574 (e.g., buttons) to allow the user to control the operation of the analyte detection

system. For example, the controller may control the operation of the light source 512 and the operation of the detector 530.

The detection system enclosure 560, may be interchangeable with the controller. Coupling members 576 and 578 may be used to remove the detection system enclosure 560 from the controller 570. A second detection system enclosure may be readily coupled to the controller using coupling members 576 and 578. In this manner, a variety of different types of analytes may be detecting using a variety of different detection system enclosures. Each of the detection system enclosures may include different sensor arrays mounted within their chambers. Instead of having to exchange the sensor array for different types of analysis, the entire detection system enclosure may be exchanged. This may prove advantageous, when a variety of detection schemes are used. For example a first detection system enclosure may be configured for white light applications. The first detection system enclosure may include a white light source, a sensor that includes particles that produce a visible light response in the presence of an analyte, and a detector sensitive to white light. A second detection system enclosure may be configured for fluorescent applications, including a fluorescent light source, a sensor array which includes particles which produce a fluorescent response on the presence of an analyte, and a fluorescent detector. The second detection system enclosure may also include other components necessary for producing a proper detection system. For example, the second detection system may also include a filter for preventing short wavelength excitation from producing "false" signals in the optical detection system during fluorescence measurements. A user need only select the proper detection system enclosure for the detection of the desired analyte. Since each detection system enclosure includes many of the required components, a user does not have to make light source selections, sensor array selections or detector arrangement selections to produce a viable detection system.

In another embodiment, the individual components of the system may be interchangeable. The system may include coupling members 573 and 575 that allow the light source and the detector, respectively, to be removed from the chamber 550. This may allow a more modular design of the system. For example, an analysis may be first performed with a white light source to give data corresponding to an absorbance/reflectance analysis. After this analysis is performed the light source may be changed to a ultraviolet light source to allow ultraviolet analysis of the particles. Since the particles have already been treated with the fluid, the analysis may be preformed without further treatment of the particles with a fluid. In this manner a variety of tests may be performed using a single sensor array.

In one embodiment, the supporting member is made of any material capable of supporting the particles, while allowing the passage of the appropriate wavelength of light. The supporting member may also be made of a material substantially impervious to the fluid in which the analyte is present. A variety of materials may be used including plastics (e.g., photoresist materials, acrylic polymers, carbonate polymers, etc.), glass, silicon based materials (e.g., silicon, silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, etc.) and metals. In one embodiment, the supporting member includes a plurality of cavities. The cavities are preferably formed such that at least one particle is substantially contained within the cavity. Alternatively, a plurality of particles may be contained within a single cavity.

In some embodiments, it will be necessary to pass liquids over the sensor array. The dynamic motion of liquids across the sensor array may lead to displacement of the particles from the cavities. In another embodiment, the particles are preferably held within cavities formed in a supporting member by the use of a transmission electron microscope ("TEM") grid. As depicted in FIG. 19, a cavity 580 is formed in a supporting member 582.

After placement of a particle 584 within the cavity, a TEM grid 586 may be placed atop the supporting member 582 and secured into position. TEM grids and adhesives for securing TEM grids to a support are commercially available from Ted Pella, Inc., Redding, CA. The TEM grid 586 may be made from a number of materials including, but not limited to, copper, nickel, gold, silver, aluminum, molybdenum, titanium, nylon, beryllium, carbon, and beryllium-copper. The mesh structure of the TEM grid may allow solution access as well as optical access to the particles that are placed in the cavities. FIG. 20 further depicts a top view of a sensor array with a TEM grid 586 formed upon the upper surface of the supporting member 582. The TEM grid 586 may be placed on the upper surface of the supporting member, trapping particles 584 within the cavities 580. As depicted, the openings 588 in the TEM grid 586 may be sized to hold the particles 584 within the cavities 580, while allowing fluid and optical access to cavities 580.

In another embodiment, a sensor array includes a supporting member configured to support the particles, while allowing the passage of the appropriate wavelength of light to the particle. The supporting member, in one embodiment, includes a plurality of cavities. The cavities may be formed such that at least one particle is substantially contained within the cavity. The supporting member may be configured to substantially inhibit the displacement of the particles from the cavities during use. The supporting member may also be configured to allow the passage of the fluid through cavities, e.g., the fluid may flow from the top surface of the supporting member, past the particle, and out the bottom surface of the supporting member. This may increase the contact time between the particle and the fluid.

Figures 21A-G depict a sequence of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based supporting member which includes a removable top cover and bottom cover. The removable top cover may be configured to allow fluids to pass through the top cover and into the cavity. The removable bottom cover may also be configured to allow the fluid to pass through the bottom cover and out of the cavity. As depicted in FIG. 21A, a series of layers may be deposited upon both sides of a silicon substrate 610. First removable layers 612 may be deposited upon the silicon substrate. The removable layers 612 may be silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or photoresist material. In one embodiment, a layer of silicon dioxide 612 is deposited upon both surfaces of the silicon substrate 610. Upon these removable layers, covers 614 may be formed. In one embodiment, covers 614 are formed from a material that differs from the material used to form the removable layers 612 and which is substantially transparent to the light source of a detection system. For example, if the removable layers 612 are formed from silicon dioxide, the cover may be formed from silicon nitride. Second removable layers 616 may be formed upon the covers 614. Second removable layers 616 may be formed from a material that differs from the material used to form the covers 614. Second removable layers 616 may be formed from a material similar to the material used to form the first removable layers 612. In one embodiment, first and second removable layers 612 and 616 are formed from silicon dioxide and covers 614 are formed from silicon nitride. The layers are patterned and etched using standard photolithographic techniques. In one embodiment, the remaining portions of the layers are substantially aligned in the position where the cavities are to be formed in the silicon substrate 610.

After the layers have been etched, spacer structures may be formed on the sidewalls of the first removable layers 612, the covers 614, and the second removable layers 616, as depicted in FIG. 21B. The spacer structures may be formed from the same material used to form the second removable layers 616. In one embodiment, depositing a spacer layer of the appropriate material and subjecting the material to an anisotropic etch may form the

spacer structures. An anisotropic etch, such as a plasma etch, employs both physical and chemical removal mechanisms. Ions are typically bombarded at an angle substantially perpendicular to the semiconductor substrate upper surface. This causes substantially horizontal surfaces to be removed faster than substantially vertical surfaces. During this etching procedure the spacer layers are preferably removed such that the only regions of the
5 spacer layers that remain may be those regions near substantially vertical surfaces, e.g., spacer structures 618.

After formation of the spacer structures 618, cover support structures 620, depicted in FIG. 21C, may be formed. The cover support structures may be initially formed by depositing a support structure layer upon the second removable layer 616 and spacer structures 618. The support structure layer is then patterned and etched, using standard photolithography, to form the support structures 620. In one embodiment, the support structures are
10 formed from a material that differs from the removable layers material. In one embodiment, the removable layers may be formed from silicon dioxide while the support structures and covers may be formed from silicon nitride.

Turning to FIG. 21 D, the second removable layers 616 and an upper portion of the spacer structures 618 are preferably removed using a wet etch process. Removal of the second removable layers leaves the top surface of the covers 614 exposed. This allows the covers to be patterned and etched such that openings 622 are formed
15 extending through the covers. These openings 622 may be formed in the covers 614 to allow the passage of fluid through the cover layers. In one embodiment, the openings 622 are formed to allow fluid to pass through, while inhibiting displacement of the particles from the subsequently formed cavities.

After the openings 622 have been formed, the remainder of the first removable layers 612 and the remainder of the spacer structures 618 may be removed using a wet etch. The removal of the removable layers and
20 the spacer structures creates "floating" covers 614, as depicted in FIG. 21E. The covers 614 may be held in proximity to the silicon substrate 610 by the support structures 620. The covers 614 may now be removed by sliding the covers away from the support structures 620. In this manner removable covers 614 may be formed.

After the covers 614 are removed, cavities 640 may be formed in the silicon substrate 610, as depicted in FIG. 21F. The cavities 640 may be formed by, initially patterning and etching a photoresist material 641 to form a
25 masking layer. After the photoresist material 641 is patterned, the cavities 640 may be etched into the silicon substrate 610 using a hydroxide etch, as described previously.

After the cavities 640 are formed, the photoresist material may be removed and particles 642 may be placed within the cavities, as depicted in FIG. 21G. The particles 642, may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavity 640 by placing covers 614 back onto the upper and lower faces of the silicon substrate 610.

30 In another embodiment, a sensor array may be formed using a supporting member, a removable cover, and a secured bottom layer. FIGS. 22 A-G depict a series of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based supporting member which includes a removable top cover and a secured bottom layer. The removable top cover is preferably configured to allow fluids to pass through the top cover and into the cavity. As depicted in FIG. 22A, a series of layers may be deposited upon both sides of a silicon substrate 610. A first removable layer 612 may be
35 deposited upon the upper face 611 of the silicon substrate 610. The removable layer 612 may be silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or photoresist material. In one embodiment, a layer of silicon dioxide 612 is deposited upon the silicon substrate 610. A cover 614 may be formed upon the removable layer 612 of the silicon substrate 610. In one embodiment, the cover 614 is formed from a material that differs from the material used to form the removable layer 612 and is substantially transparent to the light source of a detection system. For example, if the removable

layer 612 is formed from silicon dioxide, the cover layer 614 may be formed from silicon nitride. In one embodiment, a bottom layer 615 is formed on the bottom surface 613 of the silicon substrate 610. In one embodiment, the bottom layer 615 is formed from a material that is substantially transparent to the light source of a detection system. A second removable layer 616 may be formed upon the cover 614. Second removable layer 616 may be formed from a material that differs from the material used to form the cover layer 614. Second removable layer 616 may be formed from a material similar to the material used to form the first removable layer 612. In one embodiment, first and second removable layers 612 and 616 are formed from silicon dioxide and cover 614 is formed from silicon nitride. The layers formed on the upper surface 611 of the silicon substrate may be patterned and etched using standard photolithographic techniques. In one embodiment, the remaining portions of the layers formed on the upper surface are substantially aligned in the position where the cavities are to be formed in the silicon substrate 610.

After the layers have been etched, spacer structures may be formed on the side walls of the first removable layer 612, the cover 614, and the second removable layer 616, as depicted in FIG. 22B. The spacer structures may be formed from the same material used to form the second removable layer 616. In one embodiment, the spacer structures may be formed by depositing a spacer layer of the appropriate material and subjecting the spacer layer to an anisotropic etch. During this etching procedure the spacer layer is preferably removed such that the only regions of the spacer layer which remain may be those regions near substantially vertical surfaces, e.g., spacer structures 618.

After formation of the spacer structures 618, cover support structures 620, depicted in FIG. 22C, may be formed upon the removable layer 616 and the spacer structures 618. The cover support structures 620 may be formed by depositing a support structure layer upon the second removable layer 616 and spacer structures 618. The support structure layer is then patterned and etched, using standard photolithography, to form the support structures 620. In one embodiment, the support structures are formed from a material that differs from the removable layer materials. In one embodiment, the removable layers may be formed from silicon dioxide while the support structures and cover may be formed from silicon nitride.

Turning to FIG. 22 D, the second removable layer 616 and an upper portion of the spacer structures 618 may be removed using a wet etch process. Removal of the second removable layer leaves the top surface of the cover 614 exposed. This allows the cover 614 to be patterned and etched such that openings 622 are formed extending through the cover 614. These openings 622 may be formed in the cover 614 to allow the passage of fluid through the cover. In one embodiment, the openings 622 are formed to allow fluid to pass through, while inhibiting displacement of the particle from a cavity. The bottom layer 615 may also be similarly patterned and etched such that openings 623 may be formed extending thorough the bottom layer 615.

After the openings 622 and 623 are formed, the first removable layer 612 and the remainder of the spacer structures 618 may be removed using a wet etch. The removal of the removable layers and the spacer structures creates a "floating" cover 614, as depicted in FIG. 22E. The cover 614 may be held in proximity to the silicon substrate 610 by the support structures 620. The cover 614 may now be removed by sliding the cover 614 away from the support structures 620. In this manner a removable cover 614 may be formed.

After the cover 614 is removed, cavities 640 may be formed in the silicon substrate 610, as depicted in FIG. 22F. The cavities 640 may be formed by, initially patterning and etching a photoresist material 641 to form a

masking layer. After the photoresist material 614 is patterned, the cavities 640 may be etched into the silicon substrate 610 using a hydroxide etch, as described previously.

After the cavities 640 are formed, the photoresist material may be removed and particles 642 may be placed within the cavities, as depicted in FIG. 22G. The particles 642, may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavity 640 by placing cover 614 back onto the upper face 611 of the silicon substrate 610. The bottom layer 615 may also aid in inhibiting the particle 642 from being displaced from the cavity 640. Openings 622 in cover 614 and openings 623 in bottom layer 615 may allow fluid to pass through the cavity during use.

In another embodiment, a sensor array may be formed using a supporting member and a removable cover. FIGS. 23A-G depict a series of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based supporting member which includes a removable cover. The removable cover is preferably configured to allow fluids to pass through the cover and into the cavity. As depicted in FIG. 23A, a series of layers may be deposited upon the upper surface 611 of a silicon substrate 610. A first removable layer 612 may be deposited upon the upper face 611 of the silicon substrate 610. The removable layer 612 may be silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or photoresist material. In one embodiment, a layer of silicon dioxide 612 is deposited upon the silicon substrate 610. A cover 614 may be formed upon the removable layer 612. In one embodiment, the cover is formed from a material which differs from the material used to form the removable layer 612 and which is substantially transparent to the light source of a detection system. For example, if the removable layer 612 is formed from silicon dioxide, the cover 614 may be formed from silicon nitride. A second removable layer 616 may be formed upon the cover 614. Second removable layer 616 may be formed from a material that differs from the material used to form the cover 614. Second removable layer 616 may be formed from a material similar to the material used to form the first removable layer 612. In one embodiment, first and second removable layers 612 and 616 are formed from silicon dioxide and cover 614 is formed from silicon nitride. The layers formed on the upper surface 611 of the silicon substrate may be patterned and etched using standard photolithographic techniques. In one embodiment, the remaining portions of the layers formed on the upper surface are substantially aligned in the position where the cavities are to be formed in the silicon substrate 610.

After the layers have been etched, spacer structures 618 may be formed on the side walls of the first removable layer 612, the cover layer 614, and the second removable layer 616, as depicted in FIG. 23B. The spacer structures 618 may be formed from the same material used to form the second removable layer 616. In one embodiment, the spacers may be formed by depositing a spacer layer of the appropriate material upon the second removable layer and subjecting the material to an anisotropic etch. During this etching procedure the spacer layer is preferably removed such that the only regions of the spacer layer which remain may be those regions near substantially vertical surfaces, e.g., spacer structures 618.

After formation of the spacer structures 618, cover support structures 620, depicted in FIG. 23C, may be formed upon the removable layer 616 and the spacer structures 618. The cover support structure may be formed by initially depositing a support structure layer upon the second removable layer 616 and spacer structures 618. The support structure layer is then patterned and etched, using standard photolithography, to form the support structures 620. In one embodiment, the support structures 620 are formed from a material that differs from the removable layer materials. In one embodiment, the removable layers may be formed from silicon dioxide while the support structure and cover layer may be formed from silicon nitride.

Turning to FIG. 23D, the second removable layer 616 and an upper portion of the spacer structures 618 may be removed using a wet etch process. Removal of the second removable layer leaves the top surface of the cover 614 exposed. This allows the cover 614 to be patterned and etched such that openings 622 are formed extending through the cover 614. These openings 622 may be formed in the cover 614 to allow the passage of fluid through the cover 614.

After the openings 622 are formed, the remainder of the first removable layer 612 and the remainder of the spacer structures 618 may be removed using a wet etch. The removal of the removable layers and the spacer structures creates a "floating" cover 614, as depicted in FIG. 23E. The cover 614 is preferably held in proximity to the silicon substrate 610 by the support structures 620. The cover 614 may now be removed by sliding the cover 614 away from the support structures 620. In this manner a removable cover 614 may be formed.

After the cover 614 is removed, cavities 640 may be formed in the silicon substrate 610, as depicted in FIG. 23F. The cavities 640 may be formed by initially depositing and patterning a photoresist material 641 upon the silicon support 610. After the photoresist material 641 is patterned, the cavities 640 may be etched into the silicon substrate 610 using a hydroxide etch, as described previously. The etching of the cavities may be accomplished such that a bottom width of the cavity 643 is less than a width of a particle 642. In one embodiment, the width of the bottom of the cavity may be controlled by varying the etch time. Typically, longer etching times result in a larger opening at the bottom of the cavity. By forming a cavity in this manner, a particle placed in the cavity may be too large to pass through the bottom of the cavity. Thus, a supporting member that does not include a bottom layer may be formed. An advantage of this process is that the processing steps may be reduced making production simpler.

After the cavities 640 are formed, the photoresist material may be removed and particles 642 may be placed within the cavities, as depicted in FIG. 23G. The particles 642, may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavity 640 by placing cover 614 back onto the upper face 611 of the silicon substrate 610. The narrow bottom portion of the cavity may also aid in inhibiting the particle 642 from being displaced from the cavity 640.

Figures 24A-d depict a sequence of processing steps for the formation of a silicon based supporting member which includes a top partial cover and a bottom partial cover. The top partial cover and bottom partial covers are, in one embodiment, configured to allow fluids to pass into the cavity and out through the bottom of the cavity. As depicted in FIG. 24A, a bottom layer 712 may be deposited onto the bottom surface of a silicon substrate 710. The bottom layer 712 may be silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or photoresist material. In one embodiment, a layer of silicon nitride 712 is deposited upon the silicon substrate 710. In one embodiment, openings 714 are formed through the bottom layer as depicted in FIG. 24A. Openings 714, in one embodiment, are substantially aligned with the position of the cavities to be subsequently formed. The openings 714 may have a width that is substantially less than a width of a particle. Thus a particle will be inhibited from passing through the openings 714.

Cavities 716 may be formed in the silicon substrate 710, as depicted in FIG. 24B. The cavities 716 may be formed by initially depositing and patterning a photoresist layer upon the silicon substrate 710. After the photoresist material is patterned, cavities 716 may be etched into the silicon substrate 710 using a number of etching techniques, including wet and plasma etches. The width of the cavities 716 is preferably greater than the width of a particle, thus allowing a particle to be placed within each of the cavities. The cavities 716, in one

embodiment, are preferably formed such that the cavities are substantially aligned over the openings 714 formed in the bottom layer.

After the cavities have been formed, particles 718 may be inserted into the cavities 716, as depicted in FIG. 24C. The etched bottom layer 712 may serve as a support for the particles 718. Thus the particles 718 may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavities by the bottom layer 712. The openings 714 in the bottom layer 712 may allow fluid to pass through the bottom layer during use.

After the particles are placed in the cavities, a top layer 720 may be placed upon the upper surface 717 of the silicon substrate. In one embodiment, the top layer 720 is formed from a material is substantially transparent to the light source of a detection system. The top layer may be formed from silicon nitride, silicon dioxide or photoresist material. In one embodiment, a sheet of photoresist material is used. After the top layer 620 is formed, openings 719 may be formed in the top layer to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities. If the top layer 720 is composed of photoresist material, after depositing the photoresist material across the upper surface of the silicon substrate, the openings may be initially formed by exposing the photoresist material to the appropriate wavelength and pattern of light. If the top layer is composed of silicon dioxide or silicon nitride the top layer 720 may be developed by forming a photoresist layer upon the top layer, developing the photoresist, and using the photoresist to etch the underlying top layer.

Similar sensor arrays may be produced using materials other than silicon for the supporting member. For example, as depicted in FIG 25 A-D, the supporting member may be composed of photoresist material. In one embodiment, sheets of photoresist film may be used to form the supporting member. Photoresist film sheets are commercially available from E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, Wilmington, DE under the commercial name RISTON. The sheets come in a variety of sizes, the most common having a thickness ranging from about 1 mil. (25 μm) to about 2 mil. (50 μm).

In an embodiment, a first photoresist layer 722 is developed and etched such that openings 724 are formed. The openings may be formed proximate the location of the subsequently formed cavities. Preferably, the openings have a width that is substantially smaller than a width of the particle. The openings may inhibit displacement of the particle from a cavity. After the first photoresist layer 720 is patterned and etched, a main layer 726 is formed upon the bottom layer. The main layer 720 is preferably formed from a photoresist film that has a thickness substantially greater than a typical width of a particle. Thus, if the particles have a width of about 30 μm , a main layer may be composed of a 50 μm photoresist material. Alternatively, the photoresist layer may be composed of a multitude of photoresist layers placed upon each other until the desired thickness is achieved, as will be depicted in later embodiments.

The main photoresist layer may be patterned and etched to form the cavities 728, as depicted in FIG. 25B. The cavities, in one embodiment, are substantially aligned above the previously formed openings 724. Cavities 728, in one embodiment, have a width which is greater than a width of a particle.

For many types of analysis, the photoresist material is substantially transparent to the light source used. Thus, as opposed to a silicon supporting member, the photoresist material used for the main supporting layer may be substantially transparent to the light used by the light source. In some circumstances, the transparent nature of the supporting member may allow light from the cavity to migrate, through the supporting member, into a second cavity. This leakage of light from one cavity to the next may lead to detection problems. For example, if a first

particle in a first cavity produces a fluorescent signal in response to an analyte, this signal may be transmitted through the supporting member and detected in a proximate cavity. This may lead to inaccurate readings for the proximately spaced cavities, especially if a particularly strong signal is produced by the interaction of the particle with an analyte.

5 To reduce the occurrence of this "cross-talk", a substantially reflective layer 730 may be formed along the inner surface of the cavity. In one embodiment, the reflective layer 730 is composed of a metal layer which is formed on the upper surface of the main layer and the inner surface of the cavity. The metal layer may be deposited using chemical vapor deposition or other known techniques for depositing thin metal layers. The presence of a reflective layer may inhibit "cross-talk" between the cavities.

10 After the cavities 728 have been formed, particles 718 may be inserted into the cavities 728, as depicted in FIG. 25C. The first photoresist layer 722 may serve as a support for the particles 718. The particles may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavities by the first photoresist layer 722. The openings 724 in the first photoresist layer 722 may allow fluid to pass through the bottom layer during use.

15 After the particles 728 are placed in the cavities 728, a top photoresist layer 732 may be placed upon the upper surface of the silicon substrate. After the cover layer is formed, openings 734 may be formed in the cover layer to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities.

In another embodiment, the supporting member may be formed from a plastic substrate, as depicted in FIG. 26A-D. In one embodiment, the plastic substrate is composed of a material which is substantially resistant to the fluid which includes the analyte. Examples of plastic materials which may be used to form the plastic substrate include, but are not limited to, acrylic resins, polycarbonates, polyester resins, polyethylenes, polyimides, polyvinyl
20 polymers (e.g., polyvinyl chloride, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl dichloride, polyvinyl fluoride, etc.), polystyrenes, polypropylenes, polytetrafluoroethylenes, and polyurethanes. The plastic substrate may be substantially transparent or substantially opaque to the light produced by the light source. After obtaining a suitable plastic material 740, a series of cavities 742 may be formed in the plastic material. The cavities 740 may be formed by drilling (either
25 mechanically or with a laser), transfer molding (e.g., forming the cavities when the plastic material is formed using appropriately shaped molds), or using a punching apparatus to punch cavities into the plastic material. In one embodiment, the cavities 740 are formed such that a lower portion 743 of the cavities is substantially narrower than an upper portion 744 of the cavities. The lower portion 743 of the cavities may have a width substantially less than a width of a particle. The lower portion 743 of the cavities 740 may inhibit the displacement of a particle from the
30 cavity 740. While depicted as rectangular, with a narrower rectangular opening at the bottom, it should be understood that the cavity may be formed in a number of shapes including but not limited to pyramidal, triangular, trapezoidal, and oval shapes. An example of a pyramidal cavity which is tapered such that the particle is inhibited from being displaced from the cavity is depicted in FIG. 25D.

After the cavities 742 are formed, particles 718 may be inserted into the cavities 742, as depicted in FIG. 26B. The lower portion 743 of the cavities may serve as a support for the particles 718. The particles 718 may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavities 742 by the lower portion 743 of the cavity. After the particles are placed in the cavity 740, a cover 744 may be placed upon the upper surface 745 of the plastic substrate 740, as depicted in FIG. 26C. In one embodiment, the cover is formed from a film of photoresist material. After the cover

744 is placed on the plastic substrate 740, openings 739 may be formed in the cover layer to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities.

In some circumstances a substantially transparent plastic material may be used. As described above, the use of a transparent supporting member may lead to "cross-talk" between the cavities. To reduce the occurrence of this "cross-talk", a substantially reflective layer 748 may be formed on the inner surface 746 of the cavity, as depicted in FIG. 26E. In one embodiment, the reflective layer 748 is composed of a metal layer which is formed on the inner surface of the cavities 742. The metal layer may be deposited using chemical vapor deposition or other techniques for depositing thin metal layers. The presence of a reflective layer may inhibit cross-talk between the cavities.

In another embodiment, a silicon based supporting member for a sensing particle may be formed without a bottom layer. In this embodiment, the cavity may be tapered to inhibit the passage of the particle from the cavity, through the bottom of the supporting member. FIG. 27A-D, depicts the formation of a supporting member from a silicon substrate. In this embodiment, a photoresist layer 750 is formed upon an upper surface of a silicon substrate 752, as depicted in FIG. 27A. The photoresist layer 750 may be patterned and developed such that the regions of the silicon substrate in which the cavities will be formed are exposed.

Cavities 754 may now be formed, as depicted in FIG. 27B, by subjecting the silicon substrate to an anisotropic etch. In one embodiment, a potassium hydroxide etch is used to produce tapered cavities. The etching may be controlled such that the width of the bottom of the cavities 750 is less than a width of the particle. After the cavities have been etched, a particle 756 may be inserted into the cavities 754 as depicted in FIG. 27C. The particle 756 may be inhibited from passing out of the cavities 754 by the narrower bottom portion of the cavities. After the particle is positioned within the cavities 754, a cover 758 may be formed upon the silicon substrate 752, as depicted in FIG. 27D. The cover may be formed of any material substantially transparent to the light produced by the light source used for analysis. Openings 759 may be formed in the cover 758 to allow the fluid to pass into the cavity from the top face of the supporting member 752. The openings 759 in the cover and the opening at the bottom of the cavities 754 together may allow fluid to pass through the cavity during use.

In another embodiment, a supporting member for a sensing particle may be formed from a plurality of layers of a photoresist material. In this embodiment, the cavity may be tapered to inhibit the passage of the particle from the cavity, through the bottom of the supporting member. FIGS. 28A-E depict the formation of a supporting member from a plurality of photoresist layers. In an embodiment, a first photoresist layer 760 is developed and etched to form a series of openings 762 which are positioned at the bottom of subsequently formed cavities, as depicted in FIG. 28A. As depicted in FIG. 28B, a second layer of photoresist material 764 may be formed upon the first photoresist layer 760. The second photoresist layer may be developed and etched to form openings substantially aligned with the openings of the first photoresist layer 760. The openings formed in the second photoresist layer 764, in one embodiment, are substantially larger than the layers formed in the first photoresist layer 760. In this manner, a tapered cavity may be formed while using multiple photoresist layers.

As depicted in FIG. 28C, additional layers of photoresist material 766 and 768 may be formed upon the second photoresist layer 764. The openings of the additional photoresist layers 766 and 768 may be progressively larger as each layer is added to the stack. In this manner, a tapered cavity may be formed. Additional layers of photoresist material may be added until the desired thickness of the supporting member is obtained. The thickness

of the supporting member, in one embodiment, is greater than a width of a particle. For example, if a layer of photoresist material has a thickness of about 25 μm and a particle has a width of about 100 μm , a supporting member may be formed from four or more layers of photoresist material. While depicted as pyramidal, the cavity may be formed in a number of different shapes, including but not limited to, rectangular, circular, oval, triangular, and trapezoidal. Any of these shapes may be obtained by appropriate patterning and etching of the photoresist layers as they are formed.

In some instances, the photoresist material may be substantially transparent to the light produced by the light source. As described above, the use of a transparent supporting member may lead to "cross-talk" between the cavities. To reduce the occurrence of this "cross-talk", a substantially reflective layer 770 may be formed along the inner surface of the cavities 762, as depicted in FIG. 28D. In one embodiment, the reflective layer is composed of a metal layer which is formed on the inner surface of the cavities 762. The metal layer may be deposited using chemical vapor deposition or other techniques for depositing thin metal layers. The presence of a reflective layer may inhibit "cross-talk" between the cavities.

After the cavities 762 are formed, particles 772 may be inserted into the cavities 762, as depicted in FIG. 28D. The narrow portions of the cavities 762 may serve as a support for the particles 772. The particles 772 may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavities 762 by the lower portion of the cavities. After the particles 772 are placed in the cavities 762, a cover 774 may be placed upon the upper surface of the top layer 776 of the supporting member, as depicted in FIG. 28E. In one embodiment, the cover 774 is also formed from a film of photoresist material. After the cover layer is formed, openings 778 may be formed in the cover 774 to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities.

In another embodiment, a supporting member for a sensing particle may be formed from photoresist material which includes a particle support layer. FIGS. 29A-E depict the formation of a supporting member from a series of photoresist layers. In an embodiment, a first photoresist layer 780 is developed and etched to form a series of openings 782 which may become part of subsequently formed cavities. In another embodiment, a cavity having the appropriate depth may be formed by forming multiple layers of a photoresist material, as described previously. As depicted in FIG. 29B, a second photoresist layer 784 may be formed upon the first photoresist layer 780. The second photoresist layer 784 may be patterned to form openings substantially aligned with the openings of the first photoresist layer 782. The openings formed in the second photoresist layer 784 may be substantially equal in size to the previously formed openings. Alternatively, the openings may be variable in size to form different shaped cavities.

For reasons described above, a substantially reflective layer 786 may be formed along the inner surface of the cavities 782 and the upper surface of the second photoresist layer 784, as depicted in FIG. 29C. In one embodiment, the reflective layer is composed of a metal layer. The metal layer may be deposited using chemical vapor deposition or other techniques for depositing thin metal layers. The presence of a reflective layer may inhibit "cross-talk" between the cavities.

After the metal layer is deposited, a particle support layer 788 may be formed on the bottom surface of the first photoresist layer 780, as depicted in FIG. 29D. The particle support layer 788 may be formed from photoresist material, silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, glass or a substantially transparent plastic material. The particle support

layer 788 may serve as a support for the particles placed in the cavities 782. The particle support layer, in one embodiment, is formed from a material that is substantially transparent to the light produced by the light source.

After the particle supporting layer 788 is formed, particles 785 may be inserted into the cavities 782, as depicted in FIG. 29E. The particle support layer 788 may serve as a support for the particles. Thus the particles 785 may be inhibited from being displaced from the cavities by the particle support layer 788. After the particles 785 are placed in the cavities 782, a cover 787 may be placed upon the upper surface of the second photoresist layer 784, as depicted in FIG. 29E. In one embodiment, the cover is also formed from a film of photoresist material. After the cover is formed, openings 789 may be formed in the cover 787 to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities. In this embodiment, the fluid is inhibited from flowing through the supporting member. Instead, the fluid may flow into and out of the cavities via the openings 789 formed in the cover 787.

A similar supporting member may be formed from a plastic material, as depicted in FIGS. 30A-D. The plastic material may be substantially resistant to the fluid which includes the analyte. The plastic material may be substantially transparent or substantially opaque to the light produced by the light source. After obtaining a suitable plastic substrate 790, a series of cavities 792 may be formed in the plastic substrate 790. The cavities may be formed by drilling (either mechanically or with a laser), transfer molding (e.g., forming the cavities when the plastic substrate is formed using appropriately shaped molds), or using a punching machine to form the cavities. In one embodiment, the cavities extend through a portion of the plastic substrate, terminating proximate the bottom of the plastic substrate, without passing through the plastic substrate. After the cavities 792 are formed, particles 795 may be inserted into the cavities 792, as depicted in FIG. 30B. The bottom of the cavity may serve as a support for the particles 795. After the particles are placed in the cavities, a cover 794 may be placed upon the upper surface of the plastic substrate 790, as depicted in FIG. 30C. In one embodiment, the cover may be formed from a film of photoresist material. After the cover 794 is formed, openings 796 may be formed in the cover to allow the passage of the fluid into the cavities. While depicted as rectangular, it should be understood that the cavities may be formed in a variety of different shapes, including triangular, pyramidal, pentagonal, polygonal, oval, or circular. It should also be understood that cavities having a variety of different shapes may be formed into the same plastic substrate, as depicted in FIG. 30D.

In one embodiment, a series of channels may be formed in the supporting member interconnecting some of the cavities, as depicted in FIG. 3. Pumps and valves may also be incorporated into the supporting member to aid passage of the fluid through the cavities. A schematic figure of a diaphragm pump 800 is depicted in FIG. 31. Diaphragm pumps, in general, include a cavity 810, a flexible diaphragm 812, an inlet valve 814, and an outlet valve 816. The flexible diaphragm 812, during use, is deflected as shown by arrows 818 to create a pumping force. As the diaphragm is deflected toward the cavity 810 it may cause the inlet valve 814 to close, the outlet valve 816 to open and any liquid which is in the cavity 810 will be forced toward the outlet 816. As the diaphragm moves away from the cavity 810, the outlet valve 816 may be pulled to a closed position, and the inlet valve 814 may be opened, allowing additional fluid to enter the cavity 810. In this manner a pump may be used to pump fluid through the cavities. It should be understood that the pump depicted in FIG. 31 is a generalized version of a diaphragm based pump. Actual diaphragm pumps may have different shapes or may have inlet and outlet valves which are separate from the pumping device.

In one embodiment, the diaphragm 810 may be made from a piezoelectric material. This material will contract or expand when an appropriate voltage is applied to the diaphragm. Pumps using a piezoelectric diaphragms are described in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,344,743, 4,938,742, 5,611,676, 5,705,018, and 5,759,015, all of which are incorporated by reference. In other embodiments, the diaphragm may be activated using a pneumatic system. In these systems, an air system may be coupled to the diaphragm such that changes in air density about the diaphragm, induced by the pneumatic system, may cause the diaphragm to move toward and away from the cavity. A pneumatically controlled pump is described in United States Patent No. 5,499,909 which is incorporated by reference. The diaphragm may also be controlled using a heat activated material. The diaphragm may be formed from a temperature sensitive material. In one embodiment, the diaphragm may be formed from a material which is configured to expand and contract in response to temperature changes. A pump system which relies on temperature activated diaphragm is described in United States Patent No. 5,288,214 which is incorporated by reference.

In another embodiment, an electrode pump system may be used. FIG. 32 depicts a typical electrode based system. A series of electrodes 820 may be arranged along a channel 822 which may lead to a cavity 824 which includes a particle 826. By varying the voltage in the electrodes 820 a current flow may be induced in the fluid within the channel 822. Examples of electrode based systems include, but are not limited to, electroosmosis systems, electrohydrodynamic systems, and combinations of electroosmosis and electrohydrodynamic systems.

Electrohydrodynamic pumping of fluids is known and may be applied to small capillary channels. In an electrohydrodynamic system electrodes are typically placed in contact with the fluid when a voltage is applied. The applied voltage may cause a transfer in charge either by transfer or removal of an electron to or from the fluid. This electron transfer typically induces liquid flow in the direction from the charging electrode to the oppositely charged electrode. Electrohydrodynamic pumps may be used for pumping fluids such as organic solvents.

Electroosmosis, is a process which involves applying a voltage to a fluid in a small space, such as a capillary channel, to cause the fluid to flow. The surfaces of many solids, including quartz, glass and the like, become variously charged, negatively or positively, in the presence of ionic materials, such as for example salts, acids or bases. The charged surfaces will attract oppositely charged (positive or negative) counterions in aqueous solutions. The application of a voltage to such a solution results in a migration of the counterions to the oppositely charged electrode, and moves the bulk of the fluid as well. The volume flow rate is proportional to the current, and the volume flow generated in the fluid is also proportional to the applied voltage. An electroosmosis pump system is described in United States Patent No. 4,908,112 which is incorporated by reference.

In another embodiment, a combination of electroosmosis pumps and electrohydrodynamic pumps may be used. Wire electrodes may be inserted into the walls of a channel at preselected intervals to form alternating electroosmosis and electrohydrodynamic devices. Because electroosmosis and electrohydrodynamic pumps are both present, a plurality of different solutions, both polar and non-polar, may be pump along a single channel. Alternatively, a plurality of different solutions may be passed along a plurality of different channels connected to a cavity. A system which includes a combination of electroosmosis pumps and electrohydrodynamic pumps is described in United States Patent No. 5,632,876 which is incorporated by reference.

In an embodiment, a pump may be incorporated into a sensor array system, as depicted in FIG. 32. A sensor array 830 includes at least one cavity 832 in which a particle 834 may be placed. The cavity 832 may be configured to allow fluid to pass through the cavity during use. A pump 836 may be incorporated onto a portion of

the supporting member 838. A channel 831 may be formed in the supporting member 838 coupling the pump 836 to the cavity 832. The channel 831 may be configured to allow the fluid to pass from the pump 836 to the cavity 832. The pump 836 may be positioned away from the cavity 832 to allow light to be directed through the cavity during use. The supporting member 838 and the pump 836 may be formed from a silicon substrate, a plastic material, or photoresist material. The pump 836 may be configured to pump fluid to the cavity via the channel, as depicted by the arrows in FIG. 32. When the fluid reaches the cavity 832, the fluid may flow past the particle 834 and out through the bottom of the cavity. An advantage of using pumps is that better flow through the channels may be achieved. Typically, the channels and cavities may have a small volume. The small volume of the cavity and channel tends to inhibit flow of the fluid through the cavity. By incorporating a pump, the flow of fluid to the cavity and through the cavity may be increased, allowing more rapid testing of the fluid sample. While a diaphragm based pump system is depicted in FIG. 33, it should be understood that electrode based pumping systems may also be incorporated into the sensor array to produce fluid flows.

In another embodiment, a pump may be coupled to a supporting member for analyzing analytes in a fluid stream, as depicted in FIG. 34. A channel 842 may couple a pump 846 to multiple cavities 844 formed in a supporting member 840. The cavities 842 may include sensing particles 848. The pump may be configured to create a flow of the fluid through the channel 842 to the cavities 848. In one embodiment, the cavities may inhibit the flow of the fluid through the cavities 844. The fluid may flow into the cavities 844 and past the particle 848 to create a flow of fluid through the sensor array system. In this manner a single pump may be used to pass the fluid to multiple cavities. While a diaphragm pump system is depicted in FIG. 33, it should be understood that electrode pumping systems may also be incorporated into the supporting member to create similar fluid flows..

In another embodiment, multiple pumps may be coupled to a supporting member of a sensor array system. In one embodiment, the pumps may be coupled in series with each other to pump fluid to each of the cavities. As depicted in FIG. 35, a first pump 852 and a second pump 854 may be coupled to a supporting member 850. The first pump 852 may be coupled to a first cavity 856. The first pump may be configured to transfer fluid to the first cavity 856 during use. The cavity 856 may be configured to allow the fluid to pass through the cavity to a first cavity outlet channel 858. A second pump 854 may also be coupled to the supporting member 850. The second pump 854 may be coupled to a second cavity 860 and the first cavity outlet channel 858. The second pump 854 may be configured to transfer fluid from the first cavity outlet channel 858 to the second cavity 860. The pumps may be synchronized such that a steady flow of fluid through the cavities is obtained. Additional pumps may be coupled to the second cavity outlet channel 862 such that the fluid may be pumped to additional cavities. In one embodiment, each of the cavities in the supporting member is coupled to a pump configured to pump the fluid stream to the cavity.

In another embodiment, multiple electrode based pumps may be incorporated into the sensor array system. The pumps may be formed along the channels which couple the cavities. . As depicted in FIG. 36, a plurality of cavities 870 may be formed in a supporting member 872 of a sensor array. Channels 874 may also be formed in the supporting member 872 interconnecting the cavities 870 with each other. An inlet channel 876 and an outlet channel 877, which allow the fluid to pass into and out of the sensor array, respectively, may also be formed. A series of electrodes 878 may be positioned over the channels 874, 876, and 877. The electrodes may be used to form an electroosmosis pumping system or an electrohydrodynamic pumping system. The electrodes may

be coupled to a controller 880 which may apply the appropriate voltage to the appropriate electrodes to produce a flow of the fluid through the channels. The pumps may be synchronized such that a steady flow of fluid through the cavities is obtained. The electrodes may be positioned between the cavities such that the electrodes do not significantly interfere with the application of light to the cavities.

5 In some instances it may be necessary to add a reagent to a particle before, during or after an analysis process. Reagents may include receptor molecules or indicator molecules. Typically, such reagents may be added by passing a fluid stream which includes the reagent over the sensor array. In an embodiment, the reagent may be incorporated into the sensor array system which includes two particles. In this embodiment, a sensor array system 900 may include two particles 910 and 920 for each sensing position of the sensor array, as depicted in FIG. 37.

10 The first particle 910 may be positioned in a first cavity 912. The second particle 920 may be positioned in a second cavity 922. In one embodiment, the second cavity is coupled to the first cavity via a channel 930. The second particle includes a reagent which is at least partially removable from the second particle 920. The reagent may also be configured to modify the first particle 910, when the reagent is contacted with the first particle, such that the first particle will produce a signal when the first particle interacts with an analyte during use. The reagent

15 may be added to the first cavity before, during or after a fluid analysis. The reagent is preferably coupled to the second particle 920. The a portion of the reagent coupled to the second particle may be decoupled from the particle by passing a decoupling solution past the second particle. The decoupling solution may include a decoupling agent which will cause at least a portion of the reagent to be released by the particle. A reservoir 940 may be formed on the sensor array to hold the decoupling solution.

20 A first pump 950 and a second pump 960 may also be coupled to the supporting member 915. The first pump 950 may be configured to pump fluid from a fluid inlet 952 to the first cavity 912 via channel 930. The fluid inlet 952 is the location where the fluid, which includes the analyte, is introduced into the sensor array system. A second pump 950 may be coupled to the reservoir 940 and the second cavity 922. The second pump 960 may be used to transfer the decoupling solution from the reservoir to the second cavity 922. The decoupling solution may

25 pass through the second cavity 922 and into first cavity 912. Thus, as the reagent is removed the second particle it may be transferred to the first cavity 912, where the reagent may interact with the first particle 910. The reservoir may be refilled by removing the reservoir outlet 942, and adding additional fluid to the reservoir 940. While diaphragm based pump systems are depicted in FIG. 37, it should be understood that electrode based pumping systems may also be incorporated into the sensor array to produce fluid flows.

30 The use of such a system is described by way of example. In some instances it may be desirable to add a reagent to the first particle prior to passing the fluid which includes the analyte to the first particle. The reagent may be coupled to the second particle and placed in the sensor array prior to use, typically during construction of the array. A decoupling solution may be added to the reservoir before use. A controller 970 may also be coupled to the system to allow automatic operation of the pumps. The controller 970 may be configured to initiate the

35 analysis sequence by activating the second pump 960, causing the decoupling solution to flow from the reservoir 940 to the second cavity 922. As the fluid passes through the second cavity 922, the decoupling solution may cause at least some of the reagent molecules to be released from the second particle 920. The decoupling solution may be passed out of the second cavity 922 and into the first cavity 912. As the solution passes through the first cavity, some of the reagent molecules may be captured by the first particle 910. After a sufficient number of molecules

have been captured by the first particle 910, flow of fluid thorough the second cavity 922 may be stopped. During this initialization of the system, the flow of fluid through the first pump may be inhibited.

After the system is initialized, the second pump may be stopped and the fluid may be introduced to the first cavity. The first pump may be used to transfer the fluid to the first cavity. The second pump may remain off, thus inhibiting flow of fluid from the reservoir to the first cavity. It should be understood that the reagent solution may be added to the first cavity while the fluid is added to the first cavity. In this embodiment, both the first and second pumps may be operated substantially simultaneously.

Alternatively, the reagent may be added after an analysis. In some instances, a particle may interact with an analyte such that a change in the receptors attached to the first particle occurs. This change may not, however, produce a detectable signal. The reagent attached to the second bead may be used to produce a detectable signal when it interacts with the first particle, if a specific analyte is present. In this embodiment, the fluid is introduced into the cavity first. After the analyte has been given time to react with the particle, the reagent may be added to the first cavity. The interaction of the reagent with the particle may produce a detectable signal. For example, an indicator reagent may react with a particle which has been exposed to an analyte to produce a color change on the particle. Particle which have not been exposed to the analyte may remain unchanged or show a different color change.

As shown in FIG. 1, a system for detecting analytes in a fluid may include a light source 110, a sensor array 120 and a detector 130. The sensor array 120 is preferably formed of a supporting member which is configured to hold a variety of particles 124 in an ordered array. A high sensitivity CCD array may be used to measure changes in optical characteristics which occur upon binding of the biological/chemical agents. Data acquisition and handling is preferably performed with existing CCD technology. As described above, colorimetric analysis may be performed using a white light source and a color CCD detector. However, color CCD detectors are typically more expensive than gray scale CCD detectors.

In one embodiment, a gray scale CCD detector may be used to detect colorimetric changes. In one embodiment, a gray scale detector may be disposed below a sensor array to measure the intensity of light being transmitted through the sensor array. A series of lights (e.g., light emitting diodes) may be arranged above the sensor array. In one embodiment, groups of three LED lights may be arranged above each of the cavities of the array. Each of these groups of LED lights may include a red, blue and a green light. Each of the lights may be operated individually such that one of the lights may be on while the other two lights are off. In order to provide color information while using a gray scale detector, each of the lights is sequentially turned on and the gray scale detector is used to measure the intensity of the light passing through the sensor array. After information from each of the lights is collected, the information may be processed to derive the absorption changes of the particle.

In one embodiment, the data collected by the gray scale detector may be recorded using 8 bits of data. Thus, the data will appear as a value between 0 and 255. The color of each chemical sensitive element may be represented as a red, blue and green value. For example, a blank particle (i.e., a particle which does not include a receptor) will typically appear white. When each of the LED lights (red, blue and green) are operated the CCD detector will record a value corresponding to the amount of light transmitted through the cavity. The intensity of the light may be compared to a blank particle, to determine the absorbance of a particle with respect to the LED light which is used. Thus, the red, green and blue components may be recorded individually without the use of a

color CCD detector. In one embodiment, it is found that a blank particle exhibits an absorbance of about 253 when illuminated with a red LED, a value of about 250 when illuminated by a green LED, and a value of about 222 when illuminated with a blue LED. This signifies that a blank particle does not significantly absorb red, green or blue light. When a particle with a receptor is scanned, the particle may exhibit a color change, due to absorbance by the receptor. For example, it was found that when a particle which includes a 5-carboxyfluorescein receptor is subjected to white light, the particle shows a strong absorbance of blue light. When a red LED is used to illuminate the particle, the gray scale CCD detector may detect a value of about 254. When the green LED is used, the gray scale detector may detect a value of about 218. When a blue LED light is used, a gray scale detector may detect a value of about 57. The decrease in transmittance of blue light is believed to be due to the absorbance of blue light by the 5-carboxyfluorescein. In this manner the color changes of a particle may be quantitatively characterized using a gray scale detector.

As described above, after the cavities are formed in the supporting member, a particle may be positioned at the bottom of a cavity using a micromanipulator. This allows the location of a particular particle to be precisely controlled during the production of the array. The use of a micromanipulator may, however, be impractical for production of sensor array systems. An alternate method of placing the particles into the cavities may involve the use of a silk screen like process. A series of masking materials may be placed on the upper surface of the sensor array prior to filling the cavities. The masking materials may be composed of glass, metal or plastic materials. A collection of particles may be placed upon the upper surface of the masking materials and the particles may be moved across the surface. When a cavity is encountered, a particle may drop into the cavity if the cavity is unmasked. Thus particles of known composition are placed in only the unmasked regions. After the unmasked cavities are filled, the masking pattern may be altered and a second type of particles may be spread across the surface. Preferably, the masking material will mask the cavities that have already been filled with particle. The masking material may also mask other non-filled cavities. This technique may be repeated until all of the cavities are filled. After filling the cavities, a cover may be placed on the support member, as described above, to inhibit the displacement and mixing of the particles. An advantage of such a process is that it may be more amenable to industrial production of supporting members.

Further modifications and alternative embodiments of various aspects of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art in view of this description. Accordingly, this description is to be construed as illustrative only and is for the purpose of teaching those skilled in the art the general manner of carrying out the invention. It is to be understood that the forms of the invention shown and described herein are to be taken as the presently preferred embodiments. Elements and materials may be substituted for those illustrated and described herein, parts and processes may be reversed, and certain features of the invention may be utilized independently, all as would be apparent to one skilled in the art after having the benefit of this description of the invention. Changes may be made in the elements described herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as described in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
5 a sensor array, the sensor array comprising a supporting member comprising at least one cavity formed within the supporting member;
a particle, the particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte during use; and
a detector, the detector being configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte
10 with the particle during use;
wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a
15 plurality of cavities, and wherein the system is configured to substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within the
20 cavity.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein the light source comprises a white light source.
- 25 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer and a top cover layer,
wherein the bottom layer is positioned below a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein
the top cover layer is positioned above the upper surface of the supporting member, and wherein the
bottom layer and the top cover layer are positioned such that the particle is substantially contained
within the cavity by the bottom layer and the top cover layer.
- 30 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the bottom layer and the top cover layer are substantially transparent to
light produced by the light source.
8. The system of claim 1, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer and a top cover layer,
35 wherein the bottom layer is coupled to a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein the top
cover layer is coupled to a top surface of the supporting member; and wherein both the bottom layer
and the top cover layer are coupled to the supporting member such that the particle is substantially
contained within the cavity by bottom layer and the top cover layer.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the bottom layer and the top cover layer are substantially transparent to light produced by the light source.
10. The system of claim 1, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, and wherein the supporting member comprises silicon, and wherein the bottom layer comprises silicon nitride.
11. The system of claim 1, wherein the sensor array further comprises a sensing cavity formed on a bottom surface of the sensor array.
12. The system of claim 1, wherein the supporting member is formed from a plastic material, and wherein the sensor array further comprises a top cover layer, the top cover layer being coupled to the supporting member such that the particle is substantially contained within the cavity, and wherein the top cover layer is configured to allow the fluid to pass through the top cover layer to the particle, and wherein both the supporting member and the top cover layer are substantially transparent to light produced by the light source.
13. The system of claim 1, further comprising a fluid delivery system coupled to the supporting member.
14. The system of claim 1, wherein the detector comprises a charge-coupled device.
15. The system of claim 1, wherein the detector comprises an ultraviolet detector.
16. The system of claim 1, wherein the detector comprises a fluorescence detector.
17. The system of claim 1, wherein the detector comprises a semiconductor based photodetector, and wherein the detector is coupled to the sensor array.
18. The system of claim 1, wherein the particle ranges from about 0.05 micron to about 500 microns.
19. The system of claim 1, wherein a volume of the particle changes when contacted with the fluid.
20. The system of claim 1, wherein the particle comprises a metal oxide particle.
21. The system of claim 1, wherein the particle comprises a metal quantum particle.
22. The system of claim 1, wherein the particle comprises a semiconductor quantum particle.

23. The system of claim 1, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
24. The system of claim 23, wherein the polymeric resin comprises polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene.
25. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor molecule produces the signal in response to the pH of the fluid.
26. The system of claim 23, wherein the analyte comprises a metal ion, and wherein the receptor produces the signal in response to the presence of the metal ion.
27. The system of claim 23, wherein the analyte comprises a carbohydrate, and wherein the receptor produces a signal in response to the presence of a carbohydrate.
28. The system of claim 23, wherein the particles further comprises a first indicator and a second indicator, the first and second indicators being coupled to the receptor, wherein the interaction of the receptor with the analyte causes the first and second indicators to interact such that the signal is produced.
29. The system of claim 23, wherein the particles further comprises an indicator, wherein the indicator is associated with the receptor such that in the presence of the analyte the indicator is displaced from the receptor to produce the signal.
30. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises a polynucleotide.
31. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises a peptide.
32. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises an enzyme.
33. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises a synthetic receptor.
34. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises an unnatural biopolymer.
35. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises an antibody.
36. The system of claim 23, wherein the receptor comprises an antigen.
37. The system of claim 1, wherein the analyte comprises phosphate functional groups, and wherein the particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the phosphate functional groups.

38. The system of claim 1, wherein the analyte comprises bacteria, and wherein the particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the bacteria.
39. The system of claim 1, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
40. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
a sensor array, the sensor array comprising a supporting member comprising a plurality of cavities formed within the supporting member, wherein the supporting member comprises silicon;
a plurality of particles, the particles comprising a receptor molecule covalently linked to a polymeric resin, wherein the particles are positioned within the cavities, and wherein each of the particles is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte during use; and
a detector configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte with the particle during use;
wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.
41. The system of claim 40, wherein the system is configured to substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid.
42. The system of claim 40, wherein each cavity is configured to hold a single particle.
43. The system of claim 40, wherein each cavity is configured to hold a plurality of particles.
44. The system of claim 40, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer and a top cover layer, wherein the bottom layer is positioned below a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein the top cover layer is positioned above the upper surface of the supporting member, and wherein the bottom layer and the top cover layer are positioned such that the particle is substantially contained within the cavity by the bottom layer and the top cover layer.
45. The system of claim 44, wherein the bottom layer and the top cover layer are substantially transparent to light produced by the light source.
46. The system of claim 40, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer and a top cover layer, wherein the bottom layer is coupled to a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein the top cover layer is coupled to a top surface of the supporting member; and wherein both the bottom layer and the top cover layer are coupled to the supporting member such that the particle is

substantially contained within the cavity by bottom layer and the top cover layer.

47. The system of claim 46, wherein the bottom layer and the top cover layer are substantially transparent to light produced by the light source.

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48. The system of claim 40, wherein the sensor array further comprises a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, and wherein the bottom layer comprises silicon nitride.

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49. The system of claim 40, wherein the sensor array further comprises a sensing cavity formed on a bottom surface of the sensor array.

50. The system of claim 40, further comprising a fluid delivery system coupled to the supporting member.

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51. The system of claim 40, wherein the detector comprises a charge-coupled device.

52. The system of claim 40, wherein the detector comprises a semiconductor based photodetector, and wherein the detector is coupled to the sensor array.

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53. The system of claim 40, wherein the particle ranges from about 0.05 micron to about 500 microns.

54. The system of claim 40, wherein a volume of the particle changes when contacted with the fluid.

55. The system of claim 40, wherein the polymeric bead comprises a polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene resin.

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56. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor molecule produces the signal in response to the pH of the fluid.

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57. The system of claim 40, wherein the analyte comprises a metal ion, and wherein the receptor produces the signal in response to the presence of the metal ion.

58. The system of claim 40, wherein the analyte comprises a carbohydrate, and wherein the receptor produces a signal in response to the presence of the carbohydrate.

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59. The system of claim 40, wherein the particles further comprises a first indicator and a second indicator, the first and second indicators being coupled to the receptor, wherein the interaction of the receptor with the analyte causes the first and second indicators to interact such that the signal is produced.

60. The system of claim 40, wherein the particles further comprises an indicator, wherein the indicator is

associated with the receptor such that in the presence of the analyte the indicator is displaced from the receptor to produce the signal.

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61. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises a polynucleotide.
62. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises a peptide.
63. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises an enzyme.
- 10 64. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises a synthetic receptor.
65. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises an unnatural biopolymer.
66. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises an antibody.
- 15 67. The system of claim 40, wherein the receptor comprises an antigen.
68. The system of claim 40, wherein the particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
- 20 69. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a supporting member; wherein at least one cavity is formed within the supporting member;
a particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the
particle interacts with the analyte.
- 25 70. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising a plurality of particles positioned within the cavity.
71. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a
polymeric resin.
- 30 72. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the particle has a size ranging from about 0.05 micron to about
500 microns in diameter.
73. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the particle has a size ranging from about 0.05 micron to about
35 500 microns in diameter, and wherein the cavity is configured to substantially contain the particle.
74. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
75. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.

76. The sensor array of claim 75, wherein the cavity extends through the silicon wafer.
77. The sensor array of claim 75, wherein the cavity is substantially pyramidal in shape and wherein the sidewalls of the cavity are substantially tapered at an angle of between about 50 to about 60 degrees.
- 5 78. The sensor array of claim 75, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the silicon wafer.
- 10 79. The sensor array of claim 75, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the silicon wafer, wherein the substantially transparent layer comprises silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or silicon oxide/silicon nitride multilayer stacks.
- 15 80. The sensor array of claim 75, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the silicon wafer, wherein the substantially transparent layer comprises silicon nitride.
81. The sensor array of claim 75, wherein the silicon wafer has an area of about 1 cm² to about 100 cm².
- 20 82. The sensor array of claim 75, further comprising a plurality of cavities formed in the silicon wafer, and wherein from about 10 to about 10⁶ cavities are formed in the silicon wafer.
83. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising channels in the supporting member, wherein the channels are configured to allow the fluid to flow through the channels into and away from the cavity.
- 25 84. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising an inner surface coating, wherein the inner surface coating is configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle.
85. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising a detector coupled to the bottom surface of the supporting member, wherein the detector is positioned below the cavity.
- 30 86. The sensor array of claim 85, wherein the detector is a semiconductor based photodetector.
87. The sensor array of claim 85, wherein the detector is a Fabry-Perot type detector.
- 35 88. The sensor array of claim 85, further comprising an optical fiber coupled to the detector, wherein the optical fiber is configured to transmit optical data to a microprocessor.
89. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising an optical filters coupled to a bottom surface of the sensor array.

90. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising a barrier layer positioned over the cavity, the barrier layer being configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle during use.
- 5 91. The sensor array of claim 90, wherein the barrier layer comprises a substantially transparent cover plate positioned over the cavity, and wherein the cover plate is positioned a fixed distance over the cavity such that the fluid can enter the cavity.
92. The sensor array of claim 91, wherein the barrier layer comprises plastic, glass, quartz, silicon oxide, or silicon nitride.
- 10 93. The sensor array of claim 69, further comprising a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities formed in the supporting member.
94. The sensor array of claim 69, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
- 15 95. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a supporting member, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer, and wherein a plurality of cavities are formed within the supporting member;
a plurality of particles, at least one particle being positioned in each of the cavities, wherein the particles are configured to produce a signal when the particles interact with the analyte.
- 20 96. The sensor array of claim 95, wherein a plurality of particles is positioned within each of the cavities.
- 25 97. The sensor array of claim 95, wherein the particles comprise a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric bead.
98. The sensor array of claim 95, wherein the cavity extends through the supporting member.
- 30 99. The sensor array of claim 95, wherein the cavity is substantially pyramidal in shape and wherein the sidewalls of the cavity are substantially tapered at an angle of between about 50 to about 60 degrees.
100. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the supporting member.
- 35 101. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the silicon wafer, wherein the substantially transparent layer comprises silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, or silicon oxide/silicon nitride multilayer stacks.

102. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a substantially transparent layer positioned on a bottom surface of the silicon wafer, wherein the substantially transparent layer comprises silicon nitride.
- 5 103. The sensor array of claim 95, wherein the silicon wafer has an area of about 1 cm² to about 100 cm².
104. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a plurality of cavities formed in the silicon wafer, and wherein from about 10 to about 10⁶ cavities are formed in the silicon wafer.
- 10 105. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising channels in the supporting member, wherein the channels are configured to allow the fluid to flow through the channels into and away from the cavities.
106. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising an inner surface coating, wherein the inner surface
15 coating is configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle.
107. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a detector coupled to the bottom surface of the supporting member, wherein the detector is positioned below the cavity.
- 20 108. The sensor array of claim 107, wherein the detector is a semiconductor based photodetector.
109. The sensor array of claim 107, wherein the detector is a Fabry-Perot type detector.
110. The sensor array of claim 107, further comprising an optical fiber coupled to the detector, wherein the
25 optical fiber is configured to transmit optical data to a microprocessor.
111. The sensor array of claim 95, further comprising a barrier layer positioned over the cavity, the barrier layer being configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle during use.
- 30 112. The sensor array of claim 111, wherein the barrier layer comprises a cover plate positioned over the cavity, and wherein the cover plate is positioned a fixed distance over the cavity such that the fluid can enter the cavity.
113. The sensor array of claim 111, further comprising channels in the supporting member, wherein the
35 channels are configured to allow the fluid to flow through the channels into and away from the cavities, and wherein the barrier layer comprises a cover plate positioned upon an upper surface of the supporting member, and wherein the cover plate inhibits passage of the fluid into the cavities such that the fluid enters the cavities via the channels.

114. The sensor array of claim 111, wherein the barrier layer comprises plastic, glass, quartz, silicon oxide, or silicon nitride.
115. A method for forming a sensor array configured to detect an analyte in a fluid, comprising:
5 forming a cavity in a supporting member, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer;
placing a particle in the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte; and
forming a cover upon a portion of the supporting member, wherein the cover is configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle from the cavity.
- 10 116. The method of claim 115, wherein forming the cavity comprises anisotropically etching the silicon wafer.
117. The method of claim 115, wherein forming the cavity comprises anisotropically etching the silicon
15 wafer with a wet hydroxide etch.
118. The method of claim 115, wherein forming the cavity comprises anisotropically etching the silicon wafer such that sidewalls of the cavity are tapered at an angle from about 50 degrees to about 60 degrees.
- 20 119. The method of claim 115, wherein the silicon wafer has an area of about 1 cm² to about 100 cm².
120. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming a substantially transparent layer upon a bottom surface of the silicon wafer below the cavity.
- 25 121. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming a substantially transparent layer upon a bottom surface of the silicon wafer, wherein the cavity extends through the silicon wafer and wherein the substantially transparent layer is positioned to support the particle.
- 30 122. The method of claim 115, wherein the substantially transparent layer comprises silicon nitride.
123. The method of claim 115, wherein the cover comprises plastic, glass, quartz, silicon nitride, or silicon oxide.
- 35 124. The method of claim 115, wherein forming the cover comprises coupling the cover to the silicon wafer at a distance above the silicon wafer substantially less than a width of the particle.
125. The method of claim 115, further comprising etching channels in the silicon wafer prior to forming the cover on the silicon wafer, wherein forming the cover comprises placing the cover against the upper

surface of the silicon wafer, and wherein the channels are configured to allow the fluid to pass through the silicon wafer to and from the cavities.

126. The method of claim 115, further comprising coating an inner surface of the cavity with a material to increase adhesion of the particle to the inner surface of the cavity.
127. The method of claim 115, further comprising coating an inner surface of the cavity with a material to increase reflectivity of the inner surface of the cavity.
128. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming an optical detector upon a bottom surface of the supporting member below the cavity.
129. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming a sensing cavity upon a bottom surface of the supporting member below the cavity.
130. The method of claim 129, wherein forming the sensing cavity comprises:
forming a barrier layer upon a bottom surface of the silicon wafer;
forming a bottom diaphragm layer upon the barrier layer;
forming etch windows extending through the bottom diaphragm layer;
forming a sacrificial spacer layer upon the bottom diaphragm layer;
removing a portion of the spacer layer;
forming a top diaphragm layer; and
removing a remaining portion of the spacer layer.
131. The method of claim 130, further comprising filling a portion of the sensing cavity with a sensing substrate.
132. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming an optical filter upon the bottom surface of the supporting member.
133. The method of claim 115, further comprising forming a plurality of cavities in the silicon wafer.
134. The method of claim 115, wherein from about 10 to about 10^6 cavities are formed in the silicon wafer.
135. A sensor array produced by the method of claim 115.
136. A method of sensing an analyte in a fluid comprising:
passing a fluid over a sensor array, the sensor array comprising at least one particle positioned within a cavity of a supporting member;

monitoring a spectroscopic change of the particle as the fluid is passed over the sensor array, wherein the spectroscopic change is caused by the interaction of the analyte with the particle.

137. The method of claim 136, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in absorbance of the particle.
138. The method of claim 136, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in fluorescence of the particle.
139. The method of claim 136, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in phosphorescence of the particle.
140. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a proton atom, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced when the pH of the fluid is varied, and wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change of the particle allows the pH of the fluid to be determined.
141. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a metal cation, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the metal cation in the fluid.
142. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is an anion, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the anion in the fluid.
143. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a DNA molecule, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the DNA molecule in the fluid.
144. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a protein, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the protein in the fluid.
145. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a metabolite, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the metabolite in the fluid.
146. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a sugar, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the sugar in the fluid.
147. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is a bacteria, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the bacteria in the fluid.
148. The method of claim 136, wherein the particle comprises a receptor coupled to a polymeric resin, and further comprising exposing the particle to an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.

149. The method of claim 148, wherein a binding strength of the indicator to the receptor is less than a binding strength of the analyte to the receptor.
150. The method of claim 148, wherein the indicator is a fluorescent indicator.
- 5 151. The method of claim 136, further comprising treating the fluid with an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array, wherein the indicator is configured to couple with the analyte.
152. The method of claim 136, wherein the analyte is bacteria and further comprising breaking down the bacteria prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.
- 10 153. The method of claim 136, wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change is performed with a CCD device.
- 15 154. The method of claim 136, further comprising measuring the intensity of the spectroscopic change, and further comprising calculating the concentration of the analyte based on the intensity of the spectroscopic change.
- 20 155. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a supporting member, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer, and wherein a plurality of cavities are formed within the supporting member;
a plurality of particles, at least one particle being positioned in each of the cavities wherein the particles are configured to produce a signal when the particles interact with the analyte.
- 25 156. A method of sensing an analyte in a fluid comprising:
passing a fluid over a sensor array, the sensor array comprising:
a supporting member, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer, and wherein a plurality of cavities are formed within the supporting member; and
a plurality of particles, at least one particle being positioned in each of the cavities, wherein the particles are configured to produce a signal when the particles interact with the analyte at
30 least one particle positioned within a cavity of a supporting member;
monitoring a spectroscopic change of the particle as the fluid is passed over the sensor array, wherein the spectroscopic change is caused by the interaction of the analyte with the particle.
- 35 157. The method of claim 156, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in absorbance of the particle.
158. The method of claim 156, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in reflectance of the particle.

159. The method of claim 156, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in fluorescence of the particle.
160. The method of claim 156, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in phosphorescence of the particle.
161. The method of claim 156, wherein the analyte is a proton atom, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced when the pH of the fluid is varied, and wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change of the particle allows the pH of the fluid to be determined.
162. The method of claim 156, wherein the analyte is a metal cation, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the metal cation in the fluid.
163. The method of claim 156, wherein the particle comprises a receptor coupled to a polymeric resin, and further comprising exposing the particle to an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.
164. The method of claim 156, wherein a binding strength of the indicator to the receptor is less than a binding strength of the analyte to the receptor.
165. The method of claim 156, wherein the indicator is a fluorescent indicator.
166. The method of claim 156, further comprising treating the fluid with an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array, wherein the indicator is configured to couple with the analyte.
167. The method of claim 156, wherein the analyte is bacteria and further comprising breaking down the bacteria prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.
168. The method of claim 156, wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change is performed with a CCD device.
169. The method of claim 156, further comprising measuring the intensity of the spectroscopic change, and further comprising calculating the concentration of the analyte based on the intensity of the spectroscopic change.
170. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
a sensor array, the sensor array comprising at least one particle coupled to the sensor array, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte; and
a detector configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte with the particle;

wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.

171. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
5 at least one particle coupled to the sensor array, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte.
172. A method of sensing an analyte in a fluid comprising:
10 passing a fluid over a sensor array, the sensor array comprising at least one particle coupled to a supporting member;
monitoring a spectroscopic change of the particle as the fluid is passed over the sensor array, wherein the spectroscopic change is caused by the interaction of the analyte with the particle.
173. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
15 a supporting member; wherein at least one cavity is formed within the supporting member;
a particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte;
wherein the cavities are configured to allow the fluid to pass through the supporting member during use.
- 20 174. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a plurality of particles positioned within the cavity.
175. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
- 25 176. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the particle has a size ranging from about 0.05 micron to about 500 microns in diameter.
177. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the cavity is configured to substantially contain the particle.
- 30 178. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer are removable.
179. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and
35 a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer are removable, and wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer include openings that are substantially aligned with the cavities during use.
180. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and

a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the bottom layer is coupled to a bottom surface of the supporting member and wherein the cover layer is removable. and wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer include openings that are substantially aligned with the cavities during use.

- 5 181. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein an opening is formed in the cover layer substantially aligned with the cavity, and wherein an opening is formed in the bottom layer substantially aligned with the cavity.
- 10 182. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 15 183. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 20 184. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the bottom layer is configured to support the particle, and wherein an opening is formed in the cover layer substantially aligned with the cavity.
- 25 185. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a removable cover layer coupled to the supporting member.
186. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
187. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
- 30 188. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
189. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
- 35 190. The sensor array of claim 173, wherein an inner surface of the cavity is coated with a reflective material.
191. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising channels in the supporting member, wherein the

channels are configured to allow the fluid to flow through the channels into and away from the cavity.

192. The sensor array of claim 173, further comprising a plurality of additional particles positioned within a plurality of additional cavities formed in the supporting member.

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193. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:

a light source;

a sensor array, the sensor array comprising a supporting member comprising at least one cavity formed within the supporting member, wherein the cavity is configured such that the fluid entering the cavity passes through the supporting member during use;

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a particle, the particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte during use; and

a detector, the detector being configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte with the particle during use;

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wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.

194. The system of claim 193, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the system is configured to substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid.

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195. The system of claim 193, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within the cavity.

25 196. The system of claim 193, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.

197. The system of claim 193, wherein the light source comprises a red light emitting diode, a blue light emitting diode, and a green light emitting diode.

30 198. The system of claim 193, wherein the light source comprises a white light source.

199. The system of claim 193, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer are removable.

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200. The system of claim 193, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer are removable, and wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer include openings that are substantially aligned with the cavities during use.

201. The system of claim 193, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the bottom layer is coupled to a bottom surface of the supporting member and wherein the cover layer is removable, and wherein the cover layer and the bottom layer include openings that are substantially aligned with the cavities during use.
202. The system of claim 193, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein an opening is formed in the cover layer substantially aligned with the cavity, and wherein an opening is formed in the bottom layer substantially aligned with the cavity.
203. The system of claim 193, wherein the cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
204. The system of claim 193, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
205. The system of claim 193, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover layer coupled to the supporting member and a bottom layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the bottom layer is configured to support the particle, and wherein an opening is formed in the cover layer substantially aligned with the cavity.
206. The system of claim 193, further comprising a removable cover layer.
207. The system of claim 193, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
208. The system of claim 193, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
209. The system of claim 193, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
210. The system of claim 193, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
211. The system of claim 193, wherein an inner surface of the cavity is coated with a reflective material.
212. The system of claim 193, further comprising channels in the supporting member, wherein the channels

are configured to allow the fluid to flow through the channels into and away from the cavity.

213. The system of claim 193, wherein the detector comprises a charge-coupled device.
- 5 214. The system of claim 193, wherein the detector comprises a semiconductor based photodetector, and wherein the detector is coupled to the sensor array.
215. The system of claim 193, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
- 10 216. The system of claim 215, wherein the polymeric resin comprises polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene.
217. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor molecule produces the signal in response to the pH of
15 the fluid.
218. The system of claim 215, wherein the analyte comprises a metal ion, and wherein the receptor produces the signal in response to the presence of the metal ion.
- 20 219. The system of claim 215, wherein the analyte comprises a carbohydrate, and wherein the receptor produces a signal in response to the presence of a carbohydrate.
220. The system of claim 215, wherein the particles further comprises a first indicator and a second indicator, the first and second indicators being coupled to the receptor, wherein the interaction of the
25 receptor with the analyte causes the first and second indicators to interact such that the signal is produced.
221. The system of claim 215, wherein the particles further comprises an indicator, wherein the indicator is associated with the receptor such that in the presence of the analyte the indicator is displaced from the
30 receptor to produce the signal.
222. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises a polynucleotide.
223. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises a peptide.
- 35 224. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises an enzyme.
225. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises a synthetic receptor.
226. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises an unnatural biopolymer.

227. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises an antibody.
228. The system of claim 215, wherein the receptor comprises an antigen.
- 5 229. The system of claim 193, wherein the analyte comprises phosphate functional groups, and wherein the particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the phosphate functional groups.
- 10 230. The system of claim 193, wherein the analyte comprises bacteria, and wherein the particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the bacteria.
231. The system of claim 193, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
- 15 232. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a supporting member; wherein at least one cavity is formed within the supporting member;
a particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte; and
20 a pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the pump is configured to direct the fluid towards the cavity;
wherein a channel is formed in the supporting member, the channel coupling the pump to the cavity such that the fluid flows through the channel to the cavity during use.
- 25 233. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
234. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
- 30 235. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
236. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
- 35 237. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.

238. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein an inner surface of the cavity is coated with a reflective material.
239. The sensor array of claim 232, further comprising a detector coupled to the bottom surface of the supporting member, wherein the detector is positioned below the cavity.
240. The sensor array of claim 232, further comprising a barrier layer positioned over the cavity, the barrier layer being configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle during use.
241. The sensor array of claim 232, further comprising a barrier layer positioned over the cavity, the barrier layer being configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle during use, wherein the barrier layer comprises a transmission electron microscope grid.
242. The sensor array of claim 232, further comprising a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities formed in the supporting member.
243. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
244. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises a diaphragm pump.
245. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises an electrode pump.
246. The sensor array of claim 232 wherein the pump comprises a piezoelectric pump.
247. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises a pneumatic activated pump.
248. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises a heat activated pump.
249. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises a peristaltic pump.
250. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises an electroosmosis pump.
251. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises an electrohydrodynamic pump.
252. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the pump comprises an electroosmosis pump and an electrohydrodynamic pump.

253. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein the cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 5 254. The sensor array of claim 232, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 10 255. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
a sensor array, the sensor array comprising a supporting member comprising at least one cavity formed within the supporting member, a pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the pump is configured to direct the fluid towards the cavity, and wherein a channel is formed in the supporting member, the channel coupling the pump to the cavity such that the fluid flows through the channel to
15 the cavity during use;
a particle, the particle positioned within the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte during use; and
a detector, the detector being configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte with the particle during use;
20 wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.
- 25 256. The system of claim 255, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the system is configured to substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid.
257. The system of claim 255, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.
- 30 258. The system of claim 255, wherein the light source comprises a red light emitting diode, a blue light emitting diode, and a green light emitting diode.
259. The system of claim 255, wherein the light source comprises a white light source.
- 35 260. The system of claim 255, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
261. The system of claim 255, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
262. The system of claim 255, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.

263. The system of claim 255, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
264. The system of claim 255, wherein an inner surface of the cavity is coated with a reflective material.
- 5 265. The system of claim 255, further comprising a barrier layer coupled to the supporting member, wherein the barrier layer is positioned over the cavity, the barrier layer being configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle during use.
- 10 266. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises a diaphragm pump.
267. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises an electrode pump.
268. The system of claim 255 wherein the pump comprises a piezoelectric pump.
- 15 269. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises a pneumatic activated pump.
270. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises a heat activated pump.
- 20 271. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises a peristaltic pump.
272. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises an electroosmosis pump.
273. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises an electrohydrodynamic pump.
- 25 274. The system of claim 255, wherein the pump comprises an electroosmosis pump and an electrohydrodynamic pump.
- 30 275. The system of claim 255, wherein the cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 35 276. The system of claim 255, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
277. The system of claim 255, wherein the detector comprises a charge-coupled device.

278. The system of claim 255, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
- 5 279. The system of claim 278, wherein the polymeric resin comprises polystyrene-polyethylene glycol-divinyl benzene.
- 10 280. The system of claim 278, wherein the particles further comprises a first indicator and a second indicator, the first and second indicators being coupled to the receptor, wherein the interaction of the receptor with the analyte causes the first and second indicators to interact such that the signal is produced.
- 15 281. The system of claim 278, wherein the particles further comprises an indicator, wherein the indicator is associated with the receptor such that in the presence of the analyte the indicator is displaced from the receptor to produce the signal.
282. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises a polynucleotide.
283. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises a peptide.
- 20 284. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises an enzyme.
285. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises a synthetic receptor.
286. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises an unnatural biopolymer.
- 25 287. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises an antibody.
288. The system of claim 278, wherein the receptor comprises an antigen.
- 30 289. The system of claim 255, wherein the analyte comprises bacteria, and wherein the particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the bacteria.
290. The system of claim 255, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles positioned within a plurality of cavities, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.
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291. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a supporting member; wherein a first cavity and a second cavity are formed within the supporting member;
a first particle positioned within the first cavity;
5 a second particle positioned within the second cavity, wherein the second particle comprises a reagent, wherein a portion of the reagent is removable from the second particle when contacted with a decoupling solution, and wherein the reagent is configured to modify the first particle, when the reagent is contacted with the first particle, such that the first particle will produce a signal when the first particle interacts with the analyte during use;
10 a first pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the pump is configured to direct the fluid towards the first cavity;
a second pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the second pump is configured to direct the decoupling solution towards the second cavity;
wherein a first channel is formed in the supporting member, the first channel coupling the first pump to the first cavity such that the fluid flows through the first channel to the first cavity during use, and
15 wherein a second channel is formed in the supporting member, the second channel coupling the second cavity to the first cavity such that the decoupling solution flows from the second cavity through the second channel to the first cavity during use.
- 20 292. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a first polymeric resin, and wherein the second particle comprises an indicator molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.
- 25 293. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first particle comprises an indicator molecule coupled to a first polymeric resin, and the second particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.
- 30 294. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first particle comprises a first polymeric resin configured to bind to the receptor molecule, and wherein the second particle comprises the receptor molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.
295. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
296. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
- 35 297. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
298. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry

film photoresist material.

299. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein an inner surface of the first cavity is coated with a reflective material.

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300. The sensor array of claim 291, further comprising a detector coupled to the bottom surface of the supporting member, wherein the detector is positioned below the first cavity.

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301. The sensor array of claim 291, further comprising a plurality of additional particles positioned within a plurality of additional cavities formed in the supporting member, and wherein the second cavity is coupled to the additional cavities such that the reagent may be transferred from the second particle to the additional cavities during use.

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302. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first and second pumps comprise a diaphragm pump.

303. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first and second pumps comprise an electrode pump.

304. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first pump comprises a diaphragm pump or an electrode pump and wherein the second pump comprises a diaphragm pump or an electrode pump.

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305. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein the first cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the first cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the first cavity is substantially less than a width of the first particle, and wherein the second cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the second cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of the second particle.

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306. The sensor array of claim 291, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the first cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the first cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the first cavity is substantially less than a width of the first particle, and wherein a width of a bottom portion of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the second cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of the second particle.

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307. The sensor array of claim 291, further comprising a reservoir coupled to the second pump, the reservoir configured to hold the decoupling solution.

308. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
a sensor array, the sensor array comprising:
a supporting member; wherein a first cavity and a second cavity are formed within the supporting
5 member;
a first particle positioned within the first cavity;
a second particle positioned within the second cavity, wherein the second particle comprises a
reagent, wherein a portion of the reagent is removable from the second particle when
contacted with a decoupling solution, and wherein the reagent is configured to modify the first
10 particle, when the reagent is contacted with the first particle, such that the first particle will
produce a signal when the first particle interacts with the analyte during use;
a first pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the pump is configured to direct the
fluid towards the first cavity;
a second pump coupled to the supporting member, wherein the second pump is configured to
15 direct the decoupling solution towards the second cavity;
wherein a first channel is formed in the supporting member, the first channel coupling the first
pump to the first cavity such that the fluid flows through the first channel to the first cavity
during use, and wherein a second channel is formed in the supporting member, the second
channel coupling the second cavity to the first cavity such that the decoupling solution flows
20 from the second cavity through the second channel to the first cavity during use; and
a detector, the detector being configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte
with the particle during use;
wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the
particle, and onto the detector during use.
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309. The system of claim 308, wherein the sensor array further comprises a plurality of additional particles
positioned within a plurality of additional cavities, and wherein the system is configured to
substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid, and wherein the second cavity is
coupled to the additional cavities such that the reagent may be transferred from the second particle to
30 the additional cavities during use.
310. The system of claim 308, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.
311. The system of claim 308, wherein the light source comprises a red light emitting diode, a blue light
35 emitting diode, and a green light emitting diode.
312. The system of claim 308, wherein the light source comprises a white light source.
313. The system of claim 308, wherein the first particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a first

polymeric resin, and wherein the second particle comprises an indicator molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.

314. The system of claim 308, wherein the first particle comprises an indicator molecule coupled to a first polymeric resin, and the second particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.
315. The system of claim 308, wherein the first particle comprises a first polymeric resin configured to bind to the receptor molecule, and wherein the second particle comprises the receptor molecule coupled to a second polymeric resin.
316. The system of claim 308, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
317. The system of claim 308, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
318. The system of claim 308, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
319. The system of claim 308, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
320. The system of claim 308, wherein an inner surface of the first cavity is coated with a reflective material.
321. The system of claim 308, wherein the first and second pumps comprise a diaphragm pump.
322. The system of claim 308, wherein the first and second pumps comprise an electrode pump.
323. The system of claim 308, wherein the first pump comprises a diaphragm pump or an electrode pump and wherein the second pump comprises a diaphragm pump or an electrode pump.
324. The system of claim 308, wherein the first cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the first cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the first cavity is substantially less than a width of the first particle, and wherein the second cavity is substantially tapered such that the width of the second cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of the second particle.
325. The system of claim 308, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the first cavity is substantially less

- than a width of a top portion of the first cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the first cavity is substantially less than a width of the first particle, and wherein a width of a bottom portion of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the second cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the second cavity is substantially less than a width of the second particle.
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326. The system of claim 308, wherein the sensor array further comprises a reservoir coupled to the second pump, the reservoir configured to hold the decoupling solution.
- 10 327. The system of claim 308, wherein the analyte comprises bacteria, and wherein the first particle is configured to produce the signal in the presence of the bacteria.
328. A method for forming a sensor array configured to detect an analyte in a fluid, comprising:
forming a cavity in a supporting member, wherein the cavity is configured to allow the fluid to pass
15 through the supporting member;
placing a particle in the cavity, wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte; and
placing a cover upon a portion of the supporting member, wherein the cover is configured to inhibit dislodgment of the particle from the cavity.
- 20
329. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming a substantially transparent layer upon a bottom surface of the supporting member below the cavity, wherein the bottom layer is configured to inhibit the displacement of the particle from the cavity while allowing the fluid to pass through the supporting member.
- 25
330. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming an optical detector upon a bottom surface of the supporting member below the cavity.
331. The system of claim 328, wherein a width of a bottom portion of the cavity is substantially less than a width of a top portion of the cavity, and wherein the width of the bottom portion of the cavity is
30 substantially less than a width of the particle.
332. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming channels in the supporting member wherein the channels are configured to allow the fluid to pass through the supporting member to and from the
35 cavity.
333. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming a pump on the supporting member, the pump being configured to pump the fluid to the cavity.

334. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming additional cavities in the supporting member and further comprising placing additional particles in the additional cavities.
335. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming a cover, wherein forming the cover comprises:
5 forming a removable layer upon the upper surface of the supporting member;
forming a cover upon the removable layer;
forming support structures upon the supporting member, the support structures covering a portion of the cover; and
dissolving the removable layer.
- 10 336. The method of claim 335, wherein the cover layer is formed prior to forming the cavity.
337. The method of claim 335, wherein forming the cover further comprises forming openings in the cover, wherein the openings are substantially aligned with the cavity.
- 15 338. The method of claim 328, wherein the particles are placed in the cavities using a micromanipulator.
339. The method of claim 328, further comprising forming additional cavities within the supporting member, and further comprising placing additional particles in the additional cavities, wherein placing
20 the additional particles in the additional cavities comprises:
placing a first masking layer on the supporting member, wherein the first masking layer covers a first portion of the additional cavities such that passage of a particle into the first portion of the additional cavities is inhibited, and wherein the first masking layer a second portion of the cavities substantially
unmasked,;
25 placing the additional particles on the supporting member; and
moving the additional particles across the supporting member such that the particles fall into the second portion of the cavities.
340. The method of claim 339, further comprising:
30 removing the first masking layer;
placing a second masking layer upon the supporting member, wherein the second masking layer covers the second portion of the cavities and a portion of the first portion of the cavities while leaving a third portion of the cavities unmasked;
placing additional particles on the supporting member; and
35 moving the additional particles across the supporting member such that the particle fall into the third portion of the cavities.
341. The method of claim 328, wherein forming the cover comprises coupling the cover to the supporting member at a distance above the supporting member substantially less than a width of the particle.

342. The method of claim 328, wherein the supporting member comprises a silicon wafer.
343. The method of claim 342, wherein forming the cavity comprises anisotropically etching the silicon wafer.
- 5 344. The method of claim 342, wherein forming the cavity comprises anisotropically etching the silicon wafer such that the width of the cavity narrows in a direction from a top surface of the supporting member toward a bottom surface of the supporting member, and wherein a minimum width of the cavity is substantially less than a width of the particle.
- 10 345. The method of claim 328, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
346. The method of claim 328, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
- 15 347. The method of claim 346, wherein forming the cavity comprises:
etching a first opening through a first dry film photoresist layer, the first opening having a width substantially less than a width of the particle;
placing a second dry film photoresist layer upon the first dry film photoresist layer;
20 etching a second opening through the second dry film photoresist layer, the second opening being substantially aligned with the first opening, wherein a width of the second opening is substantially greater than the width of the first opening.
348. The method of claim 347, wherein the second dry film photoresist layer comprises a thickness
25 substantially greater than a width of the particle.
349. The method of claim 345, further comprising forming a reflective layer upon the inner surface of the cavity.
- 30 350. The method of claim 328, wherein the supporting material comprises a plastic material.
351. The method of claim 350, wherein the cavity is formed by drilling the supporting material.
352. The method of claim 350, wherein the cavity is formed by transfer molding the supporting member.
- 35 353. The method of claim 350, wherein the cavity is formed by a punching device.
354. A sensor array produced by the method of claim 328.

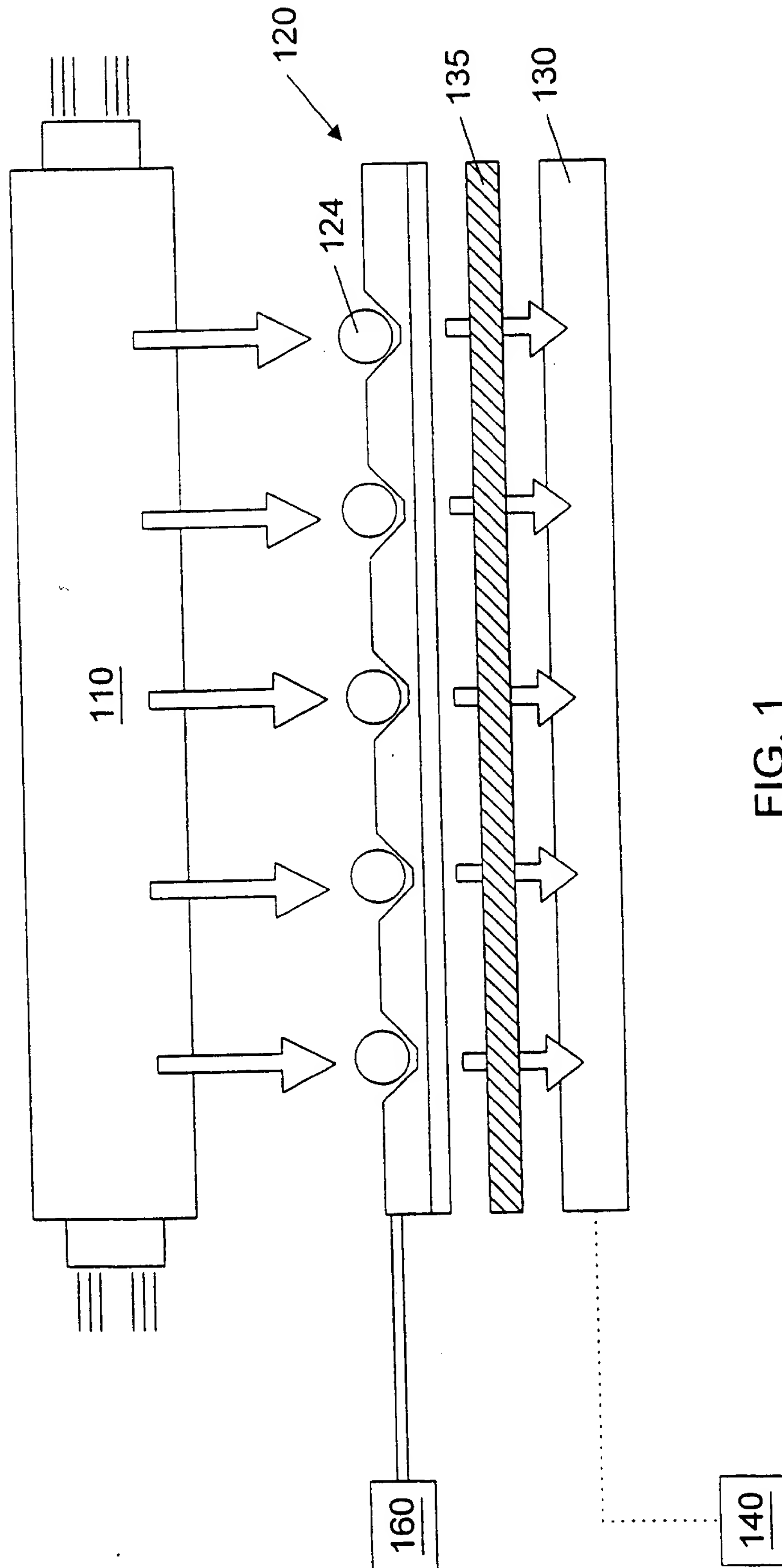
355. A sensor array produced by the method of claim 342.
356. A sensor array produced by the method of claim 345.
- 5 357. A sensor array produced by the method of claim 346.
358. A sensor array produce by the method of claim 350.
359. A method of sensing an analyte in a fluid comprising:
10 passing a fluid over a sensor array, the sensor array comprising at least one particle positioned within a cavity of a supporting member, wherein the cavity is configured such that the fluid entering the cavity passes through the supporting member;
monitoring a spectroscopic change of the particle as the fluid is passed over the sensor array, wherein the spectroscopic change is caused by the interaction of the analyte with the particle.
- 15 360. The method of claim 359, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in absorbance of the particle.
361. The method of claim 359, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in fluorescence of the
20 particle.
362. The method of claim 359, wherein the spectroscopic change comprises a change in phosphorescence of the particle.
- 25 363. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a proton atom, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced when the pH of the fluid is varied, and wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change of the particle allows the pH of the fluid to be determined.
364. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a metal cation, and wherein the spectroscopic change
30 is produced in response to the presence of the metal cation in the fluid.
365. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is an anion, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the anion in the fluid.
- 35 366. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a DNA molecule, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the DNA molecule in the fluid.
367. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a protein, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the protein in the fluid.

368. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a metabolite, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the metabolite in the fluid.
- 5 369. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a sugar, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the sugar in the fluid.
370. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is a bacteria, and wherein the spectroscopic change is produced in response to the presence of the bacteria in the fluid.
- 10 371. The method of claim 359, wherein the particle comprises a receptor coupled to a polymeric resin, and further comprising exposing the particle to an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.
372. The method of claim 371, wherein a binding strength of the indicator to the receptor is less than a binding strength of the analyte to the receptor.
- 15 373. The method of claim 371, wherein the indicator is a fluorescent indicator.
374. The method of claim 359, further comprising treating the fluid with an indicator prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array, wherein the indicator is configured to couple with the analyte.
- 20 375. The method of claim 359, wherein the analyte is bacteria and further comprising breaking down the bacteria prior to passing the fluid over the sensor array.
- 25 376. The method of claim 359, wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change is performed with a CCD device.
377. The method of claim 359, further comprising measuring the intensity of the spectroscopic change, and further comprising calculating the concentration of the analyte based on the intensity of the spectroscopic change.
- 30 378. The method of claim 359, wherein monitoring the spectroscopic change comprises:
directing a red light source at the particle;
detecting the absorbance of red light by the particle;
directing a green light source at the particle;
35 detecting the absorbance of green light by the particle;
directing a blue light source at the particle; and
detecting the absorbance of blue light by the particle.

379. A sensor array for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
at least one particle coupled to a supporting member, wherein the particle is configured to produce
a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte.
- 5 380. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the particle is coupled to the supporting member with via an
adhesive material.
381. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the particle are coupled to the supporting member via a gel
material.
- 10 382. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the particle is suspended in a gel material, the gel material
covering a portion of the supporting member, and wherein a portion of the particle extends from the
upper surface of the gel.
- 15 383. The sensor array of claim 379, further comprising a cover positioned above the particle.
384. The sensor array of claim 379, further comprising a cover coupled to the supporting member,
positioned above the particle, wherein a force exerted by the cover on the particle inhibits the
displacement of the particle from the supporting member.
- 20 385. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a
polymeric resin.
386. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
- 25 387. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist
material.
388. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry
film photoresist material.
- 30 389. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member comprises glass.
390. The sensor array of claim 379, further comprising a detector coupled to the bottom surface of the
supporting member, wherein the detector is positioned below the particle.
- 35 391. The sensor array of claim 379, further comprising a plurality of particles coupled to the supporting
member.

392. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member is composed of a material substantially transparent to visible light.
393. The sensor array of claim 379, wherein the supporting member is composed of a material substantially transparent to ultraviolet light.
394. A system for detecting an analyte in a fluid comprising:
a light source;
a sensor array, the sensor array comprising at least one particle coupled to a supporting member,
wherein the particle is configured to produce a signal when the particle interacts with the analyte, and
wherein the supporting member is substantially transparent to a portion of light produced by the light source; and
a detector configured to detect the signal produced by the interaction of the analyte with the particle;
wherein the light source and detector are positioned such that light passes from the light source, to the particle, and onto the detector during use.
395. The system of claim 394, wherein the system comprises a plurality of additional particles coupled to the supporting member, and wherein the system is configured to substantially simultaneously detect a plurality of analytes in the fluid.
396. The system of claim 394, wherein the light source comprises a light emitting diode.
397. The system of claim 394, wherein the light source comprises a red light emitting diode, a blue light emitting diode, and a green light emitting diode.
398. The system of claim 394, wherein the light source comprises a white light source.
399. The system of claim 394, wherein the particle is coupled to the supporting member with via an adhesive material.
400. The system of claim 394, wherein the particle are coupled to the supporting member via a gel material.
401. The system of claim 394, wherein the particle is suspended in a gel material, the gel material covering a portion of the supporting member, and wherein a portion of the particle extends from the upper surface of the gel.
402. The system of claim 394, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover positioned above the particle.

403. The system of claim 394, wherein the sensor array further comprises a cover coupled to the supporting member, positioned above the particle, wherein a force exerted by the cover on the particle inhibits the displacement of the particle from the supporting member.
- 5 404. The system of claim 394, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
405. The system of claim 394, wherein the supporting member comprises a plastic material.
- 10 406. The system of claim 394, wherein the supporting member comprises a dry film photoresist material.
407. The system of claim 394, wherein the supporting member comprises a plurality of layers of a dry film photoresist material.
- 15 408. The system of claim 394, wherein the supporting member comprises glass.
409. The system of claim 394, wherein the supporting member is composed of a material substantially transparent to ultraviolet light.
- 20 410. The system of claim 394, wherein the detector comprises a charge-coupled device.
411. The system of claim 394, wherein the particle comprises a receptor molecule coupled to a polymeric resin.
- 25 412. The system of claim 394, wherein the system comprises a plurality of particles coupled to the supporting member, and wherein the plurality of particles produce a detectable pattern in the presence of the analyte.



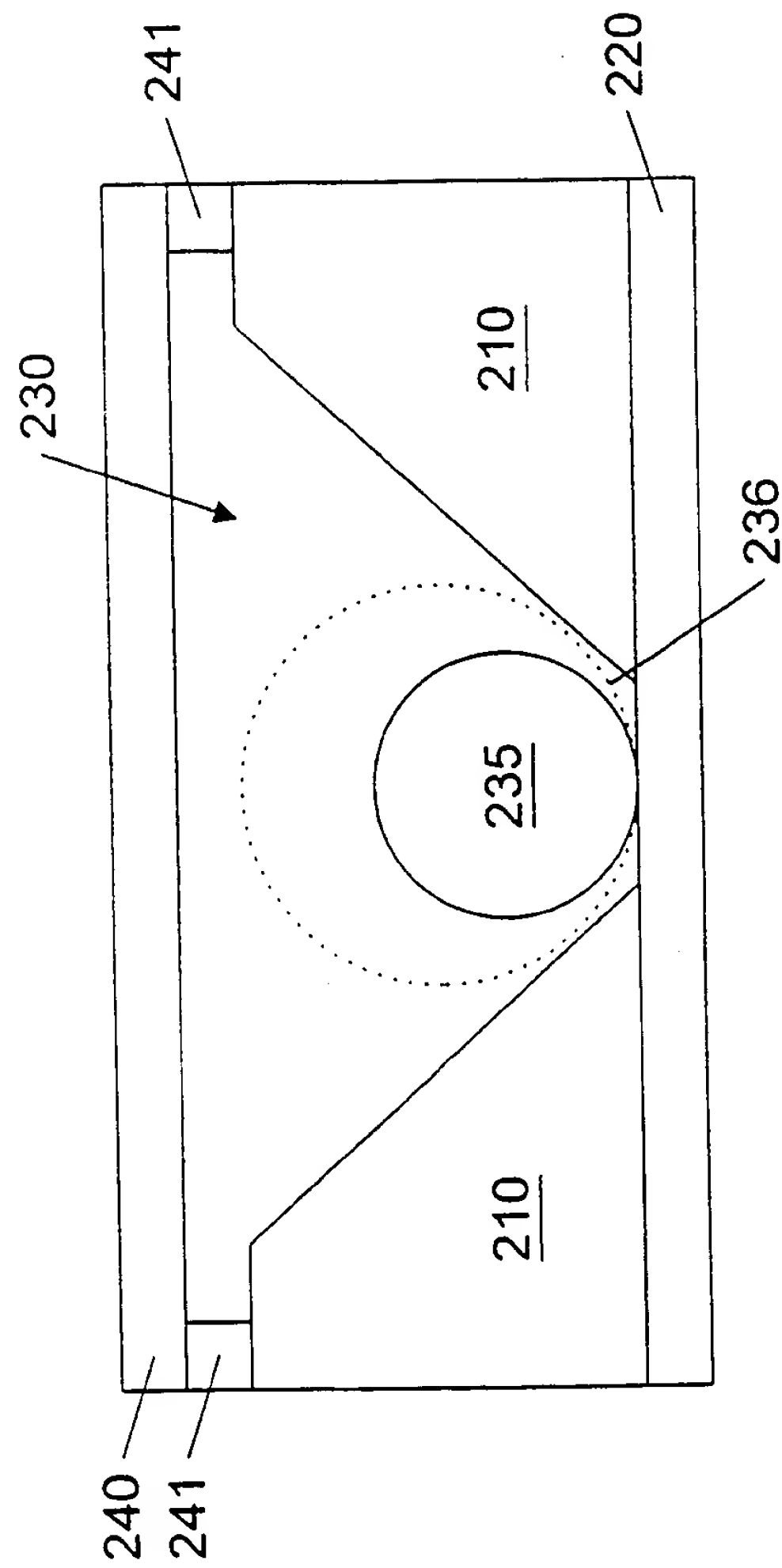


FIG. 2

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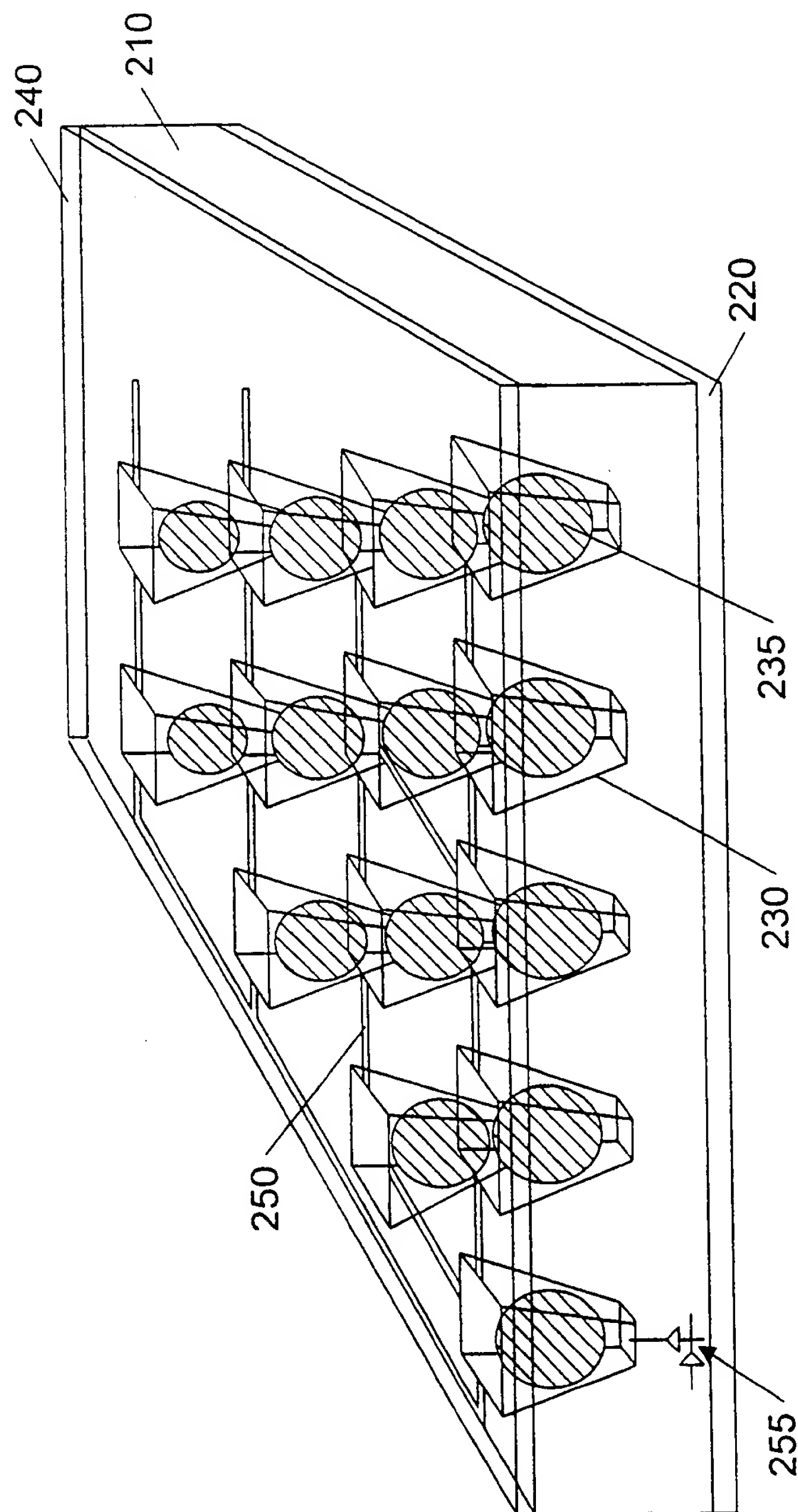


FIG. 3

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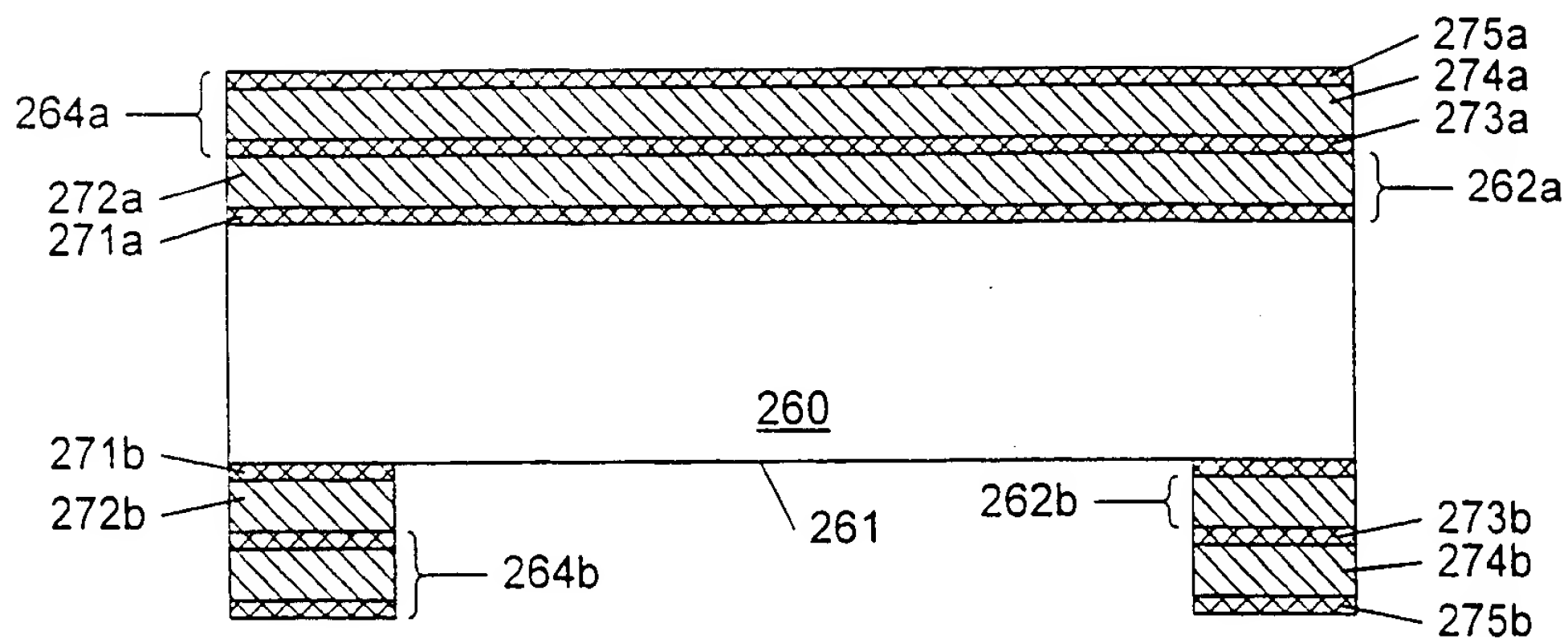


FIG. 4A

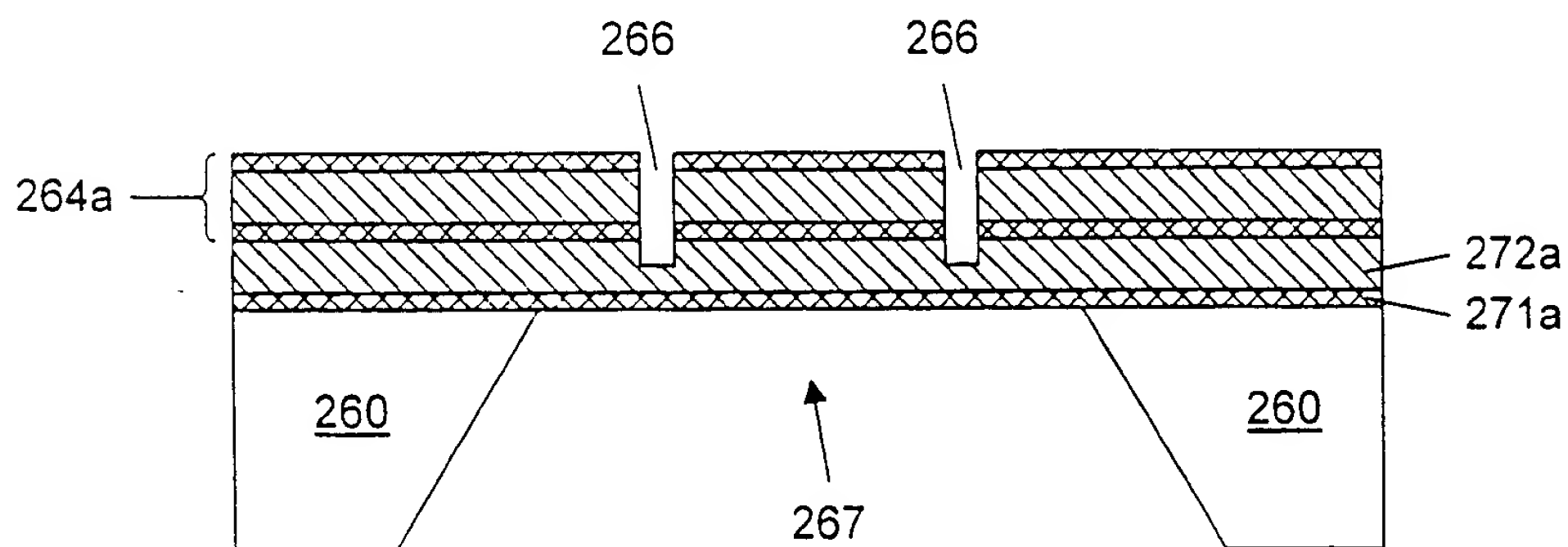


FIG. 4B

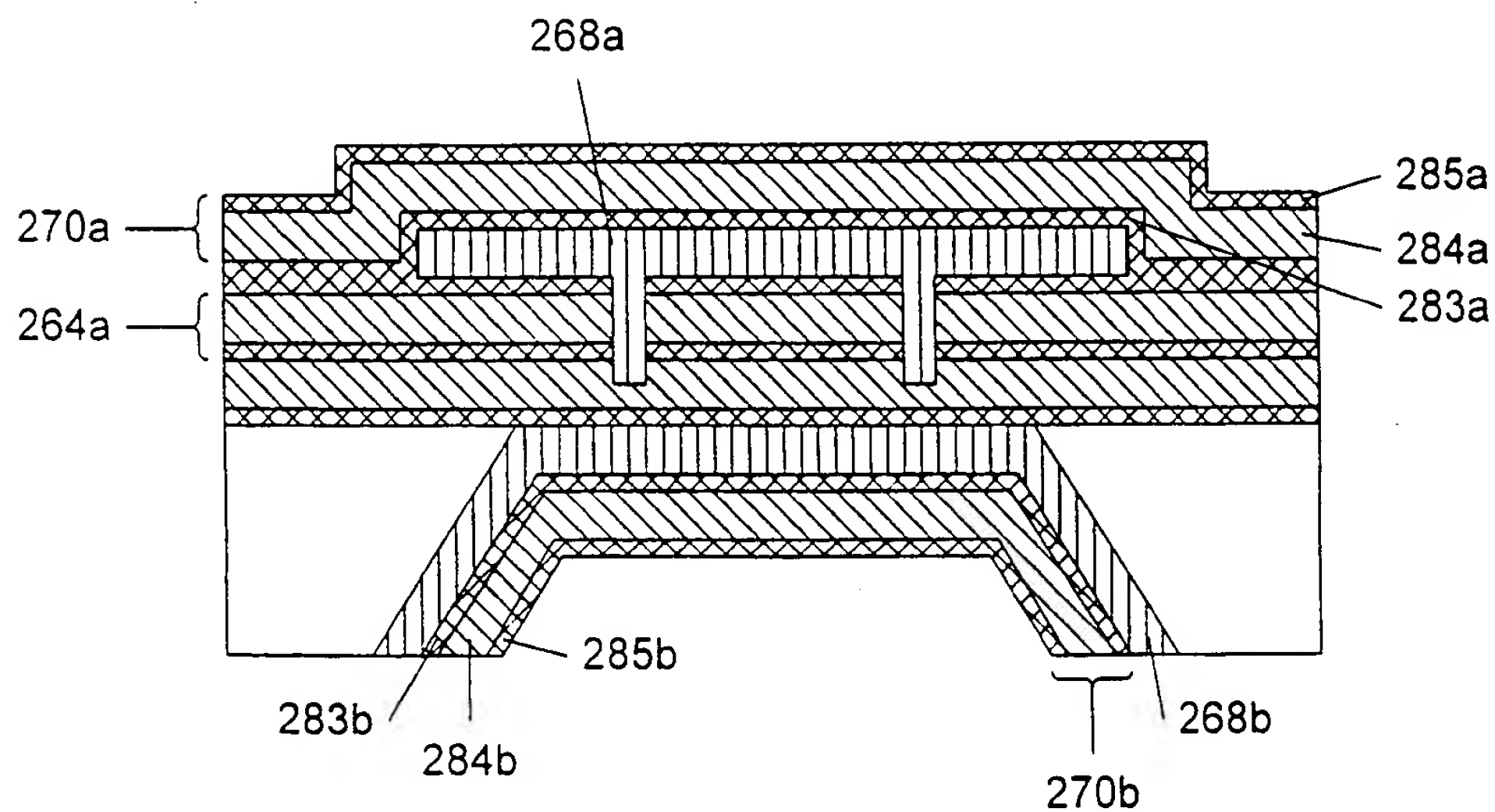


FIG. 4C

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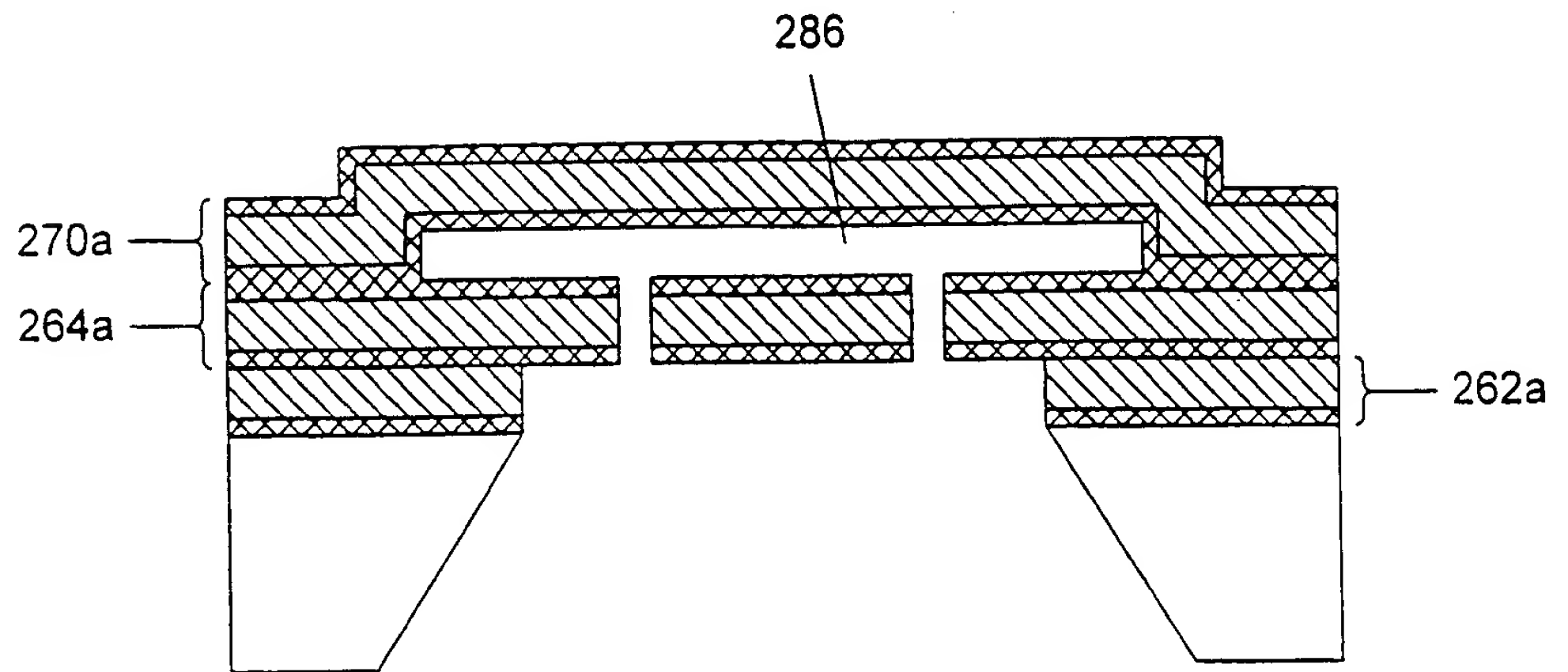


FIG. 4D

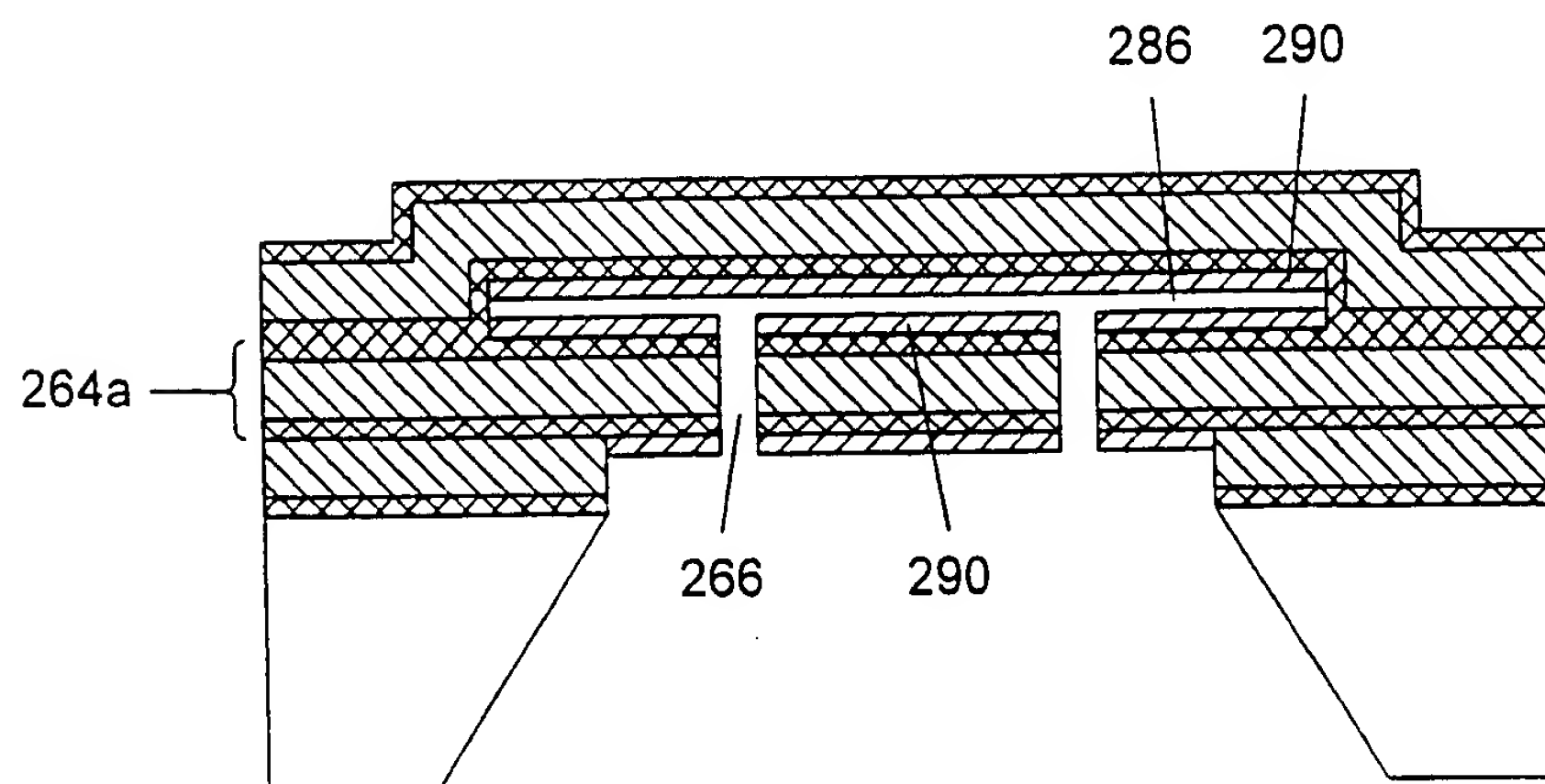


FIG. 4E

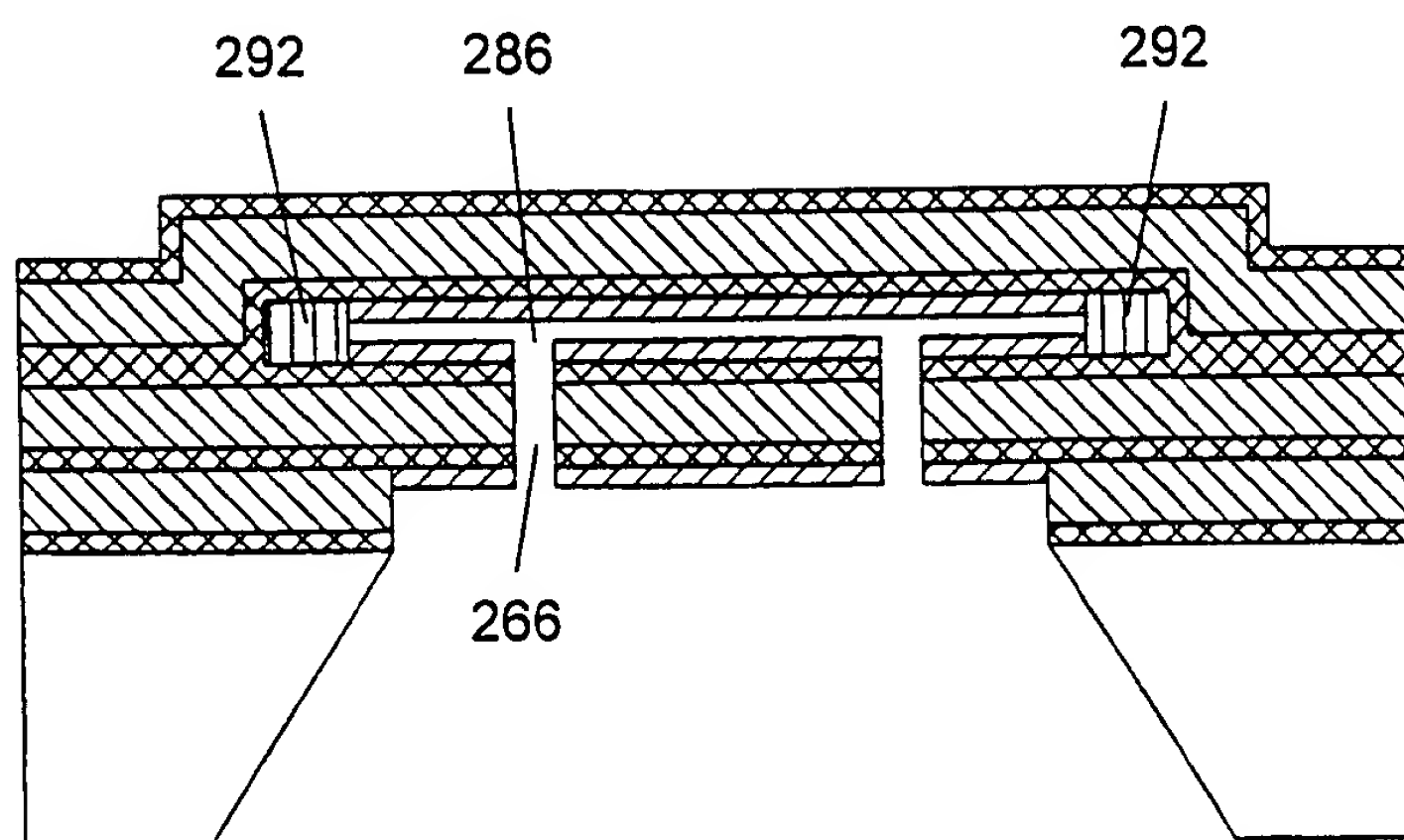


FIG. 4F

SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

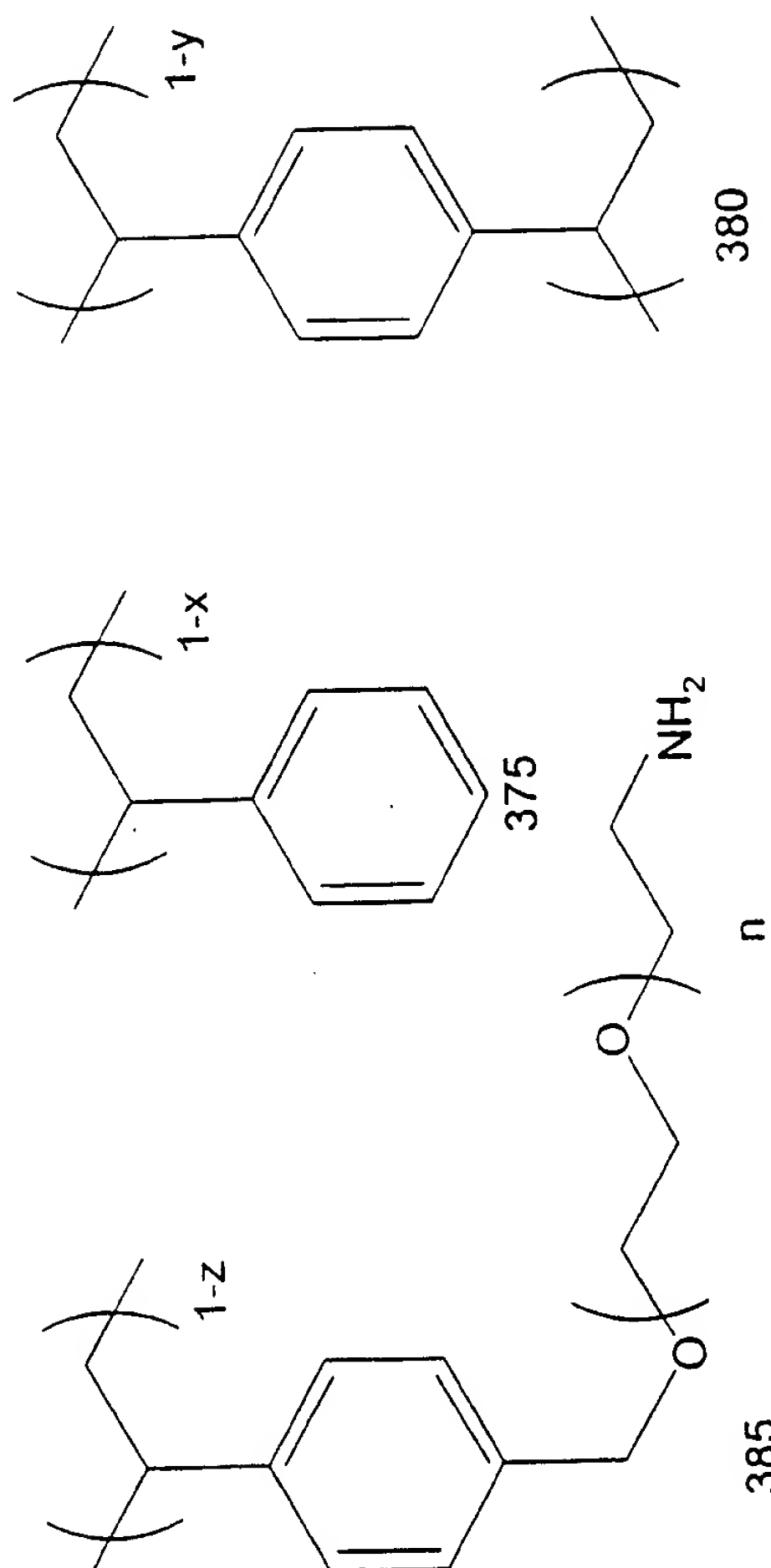


FIG. 5

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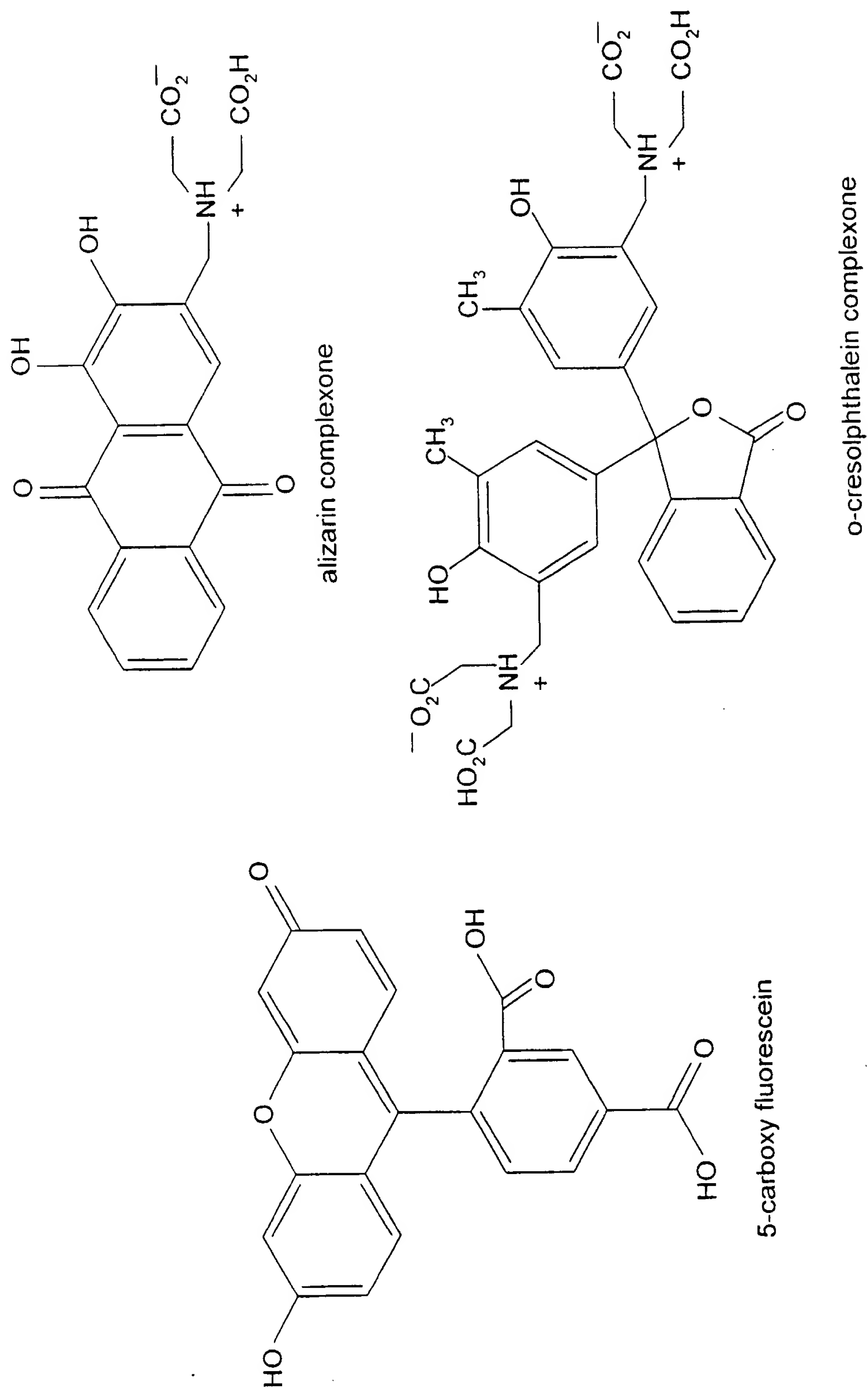


FIG. 6

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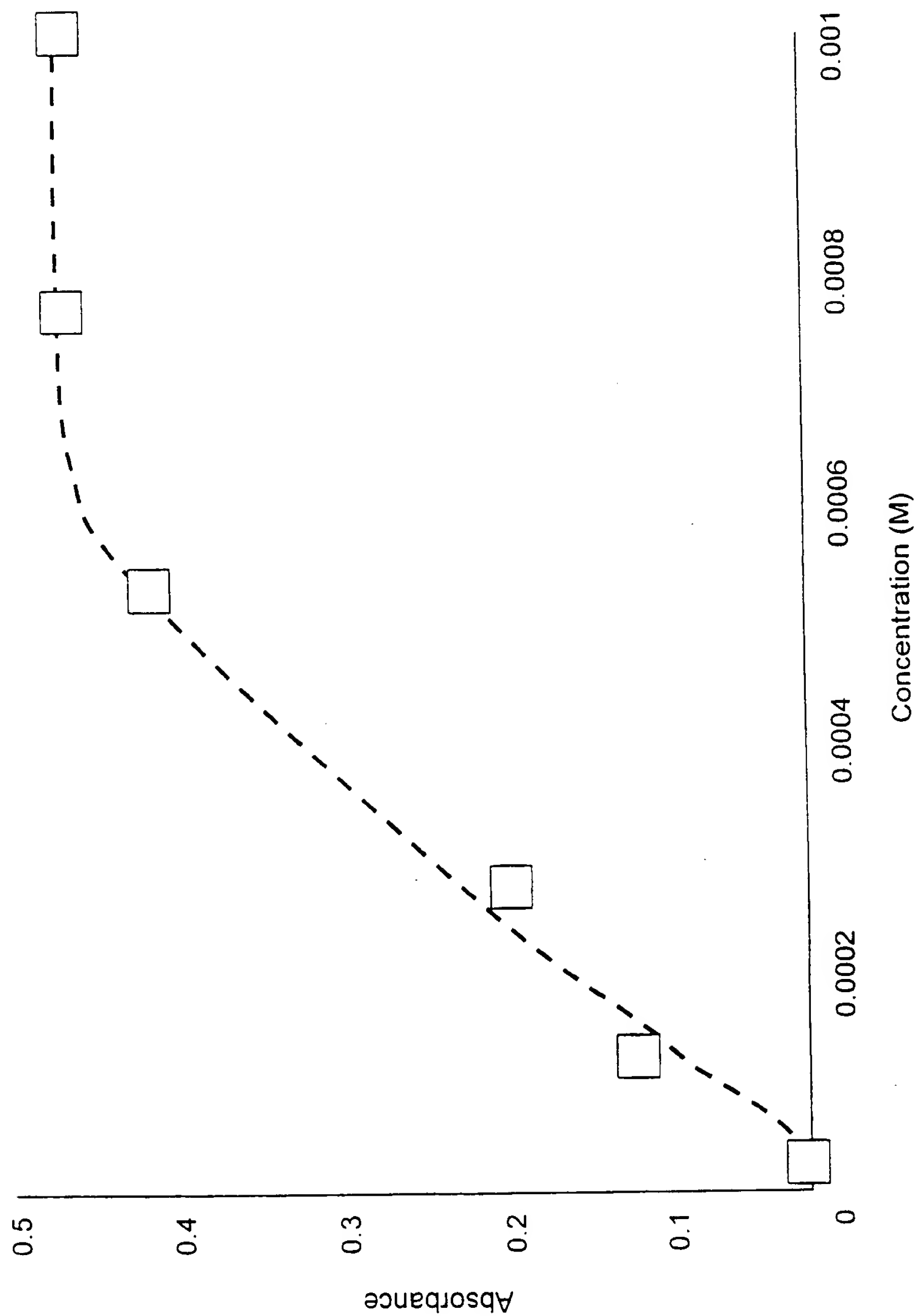


FIG. 7

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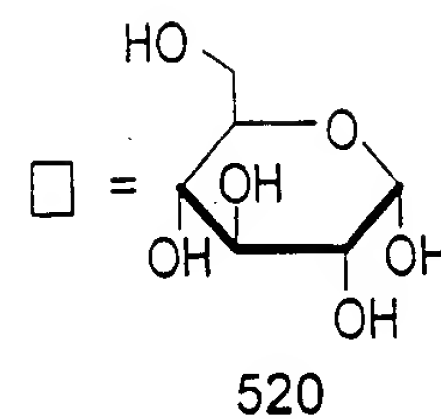
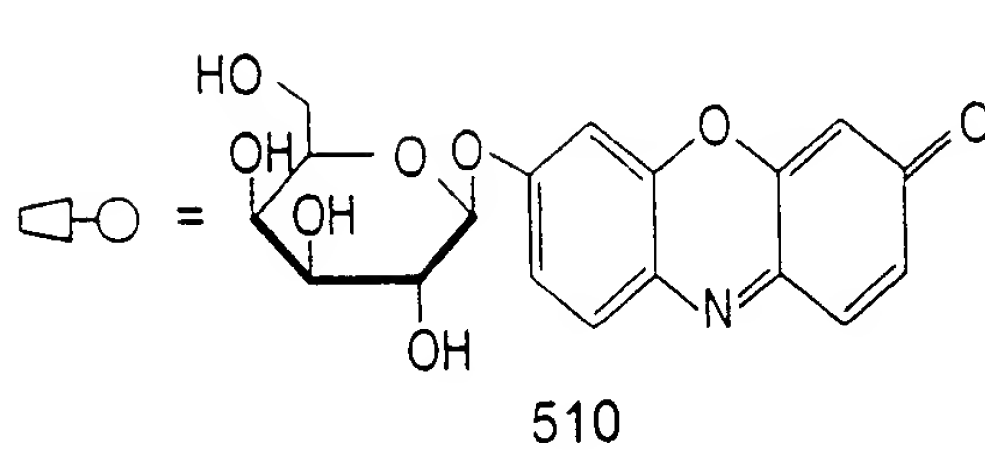
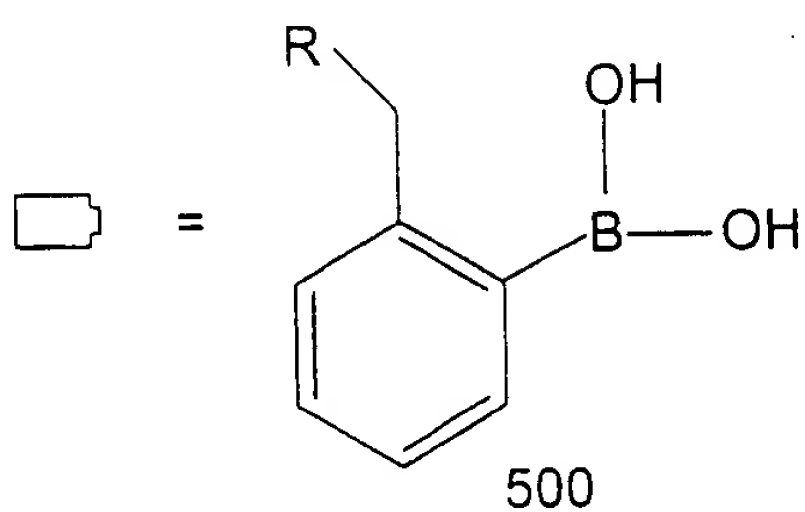
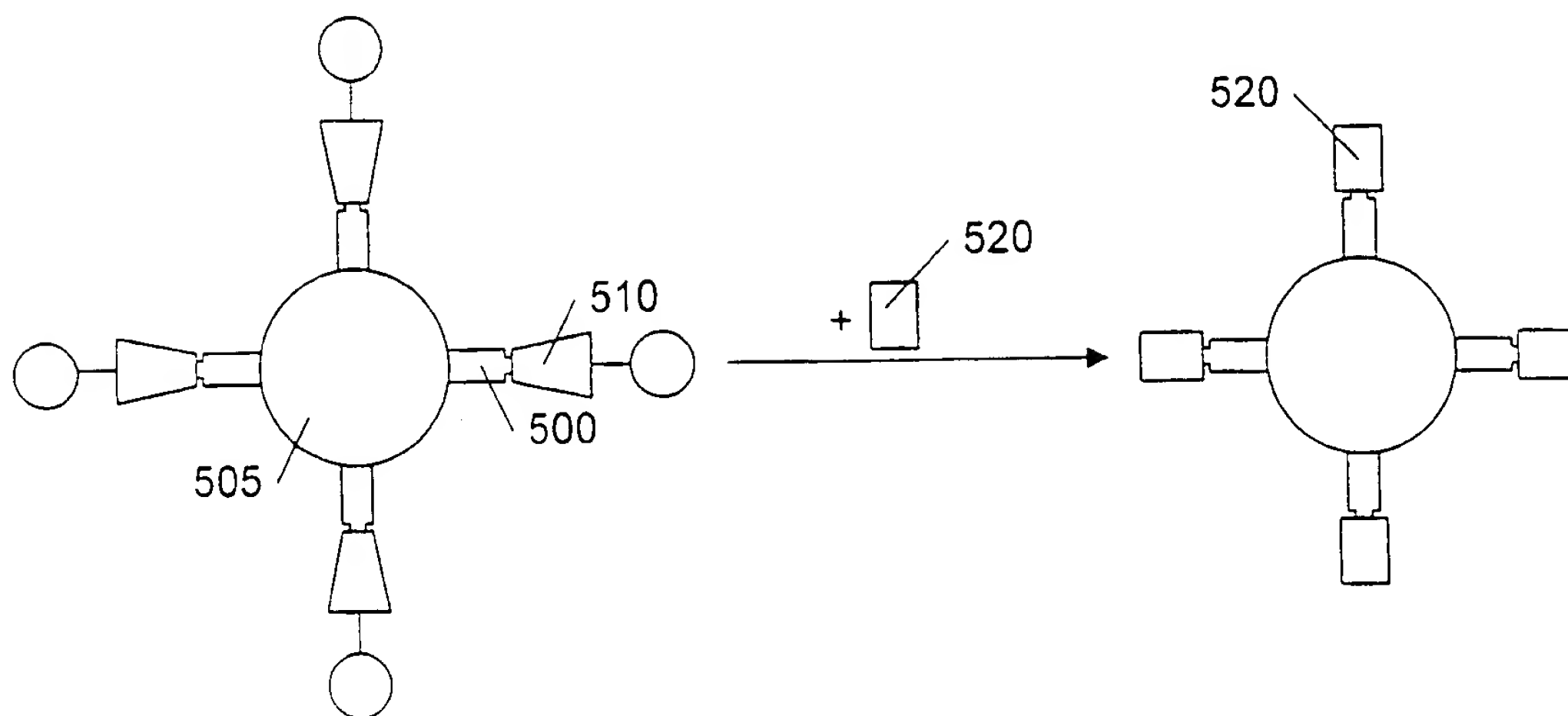
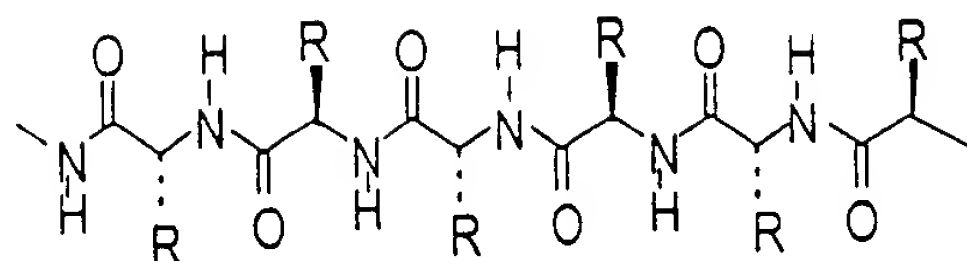
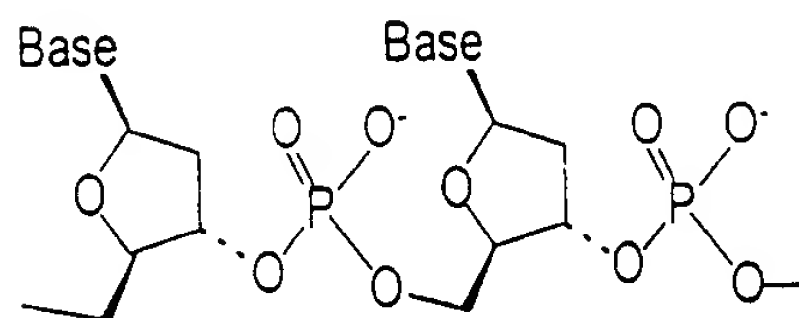


FIG. 9

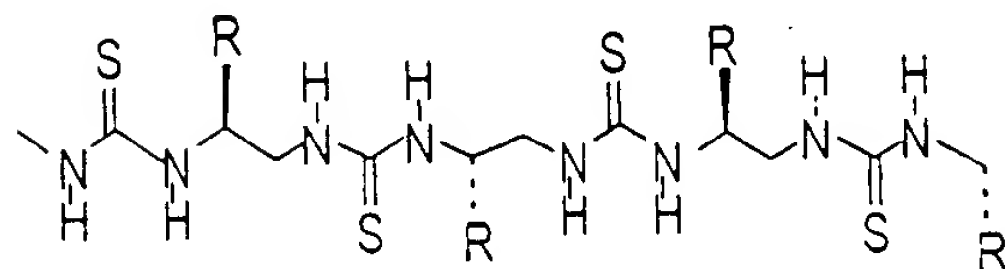
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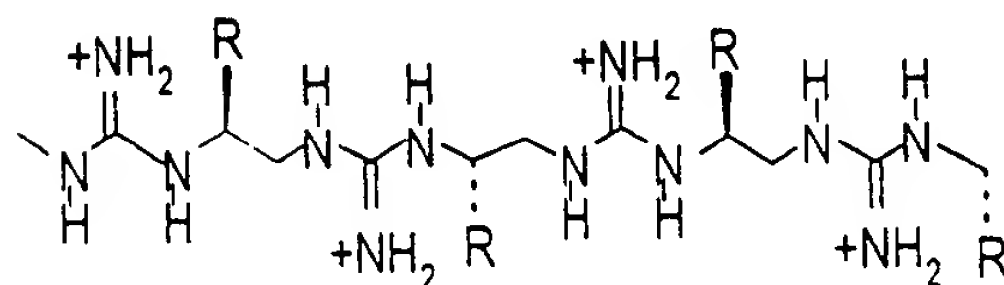
Peptides



Nucleotides



Polythioureas



Polyguanidiniums

FIG. 10

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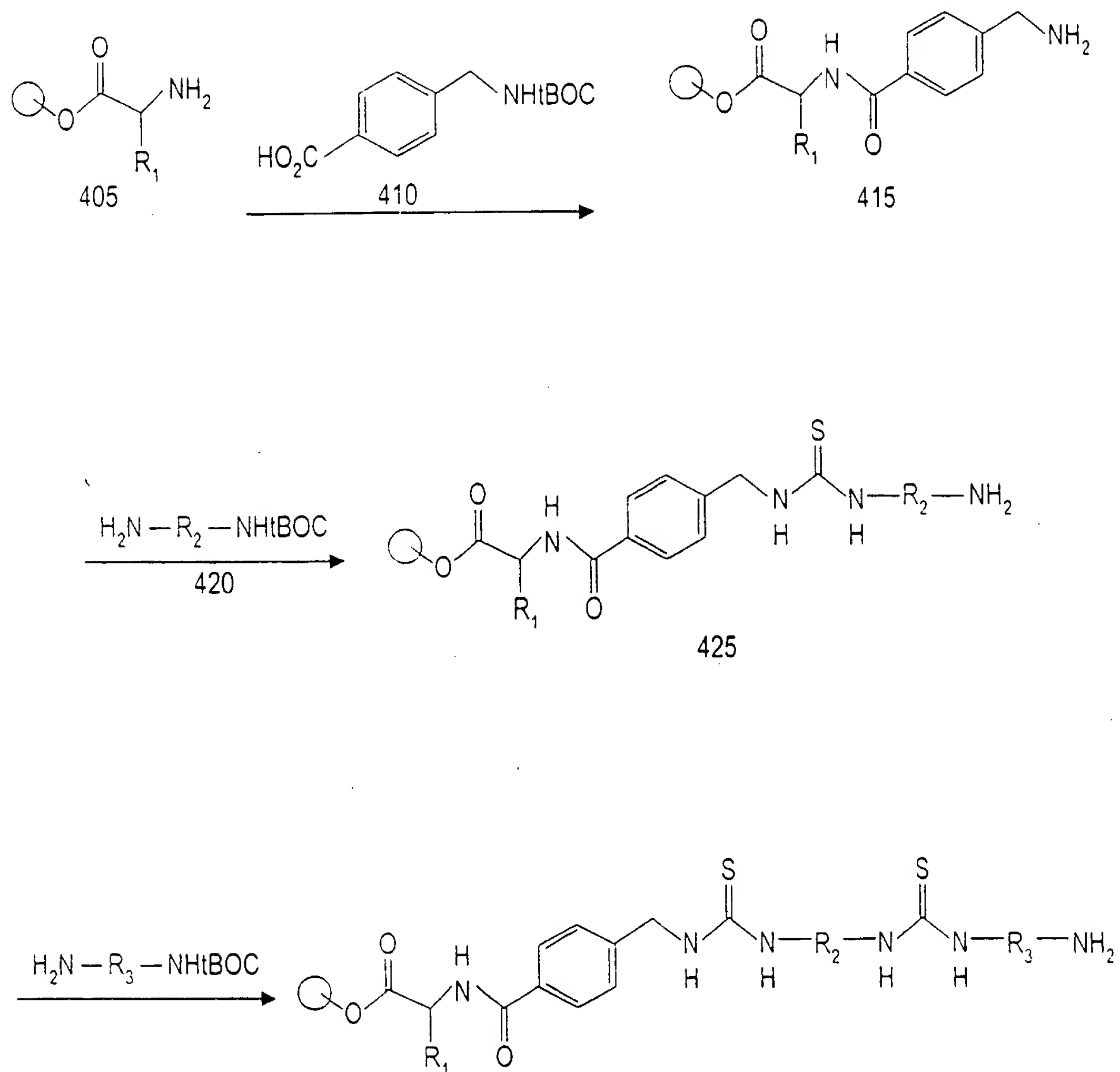


FIG. 11

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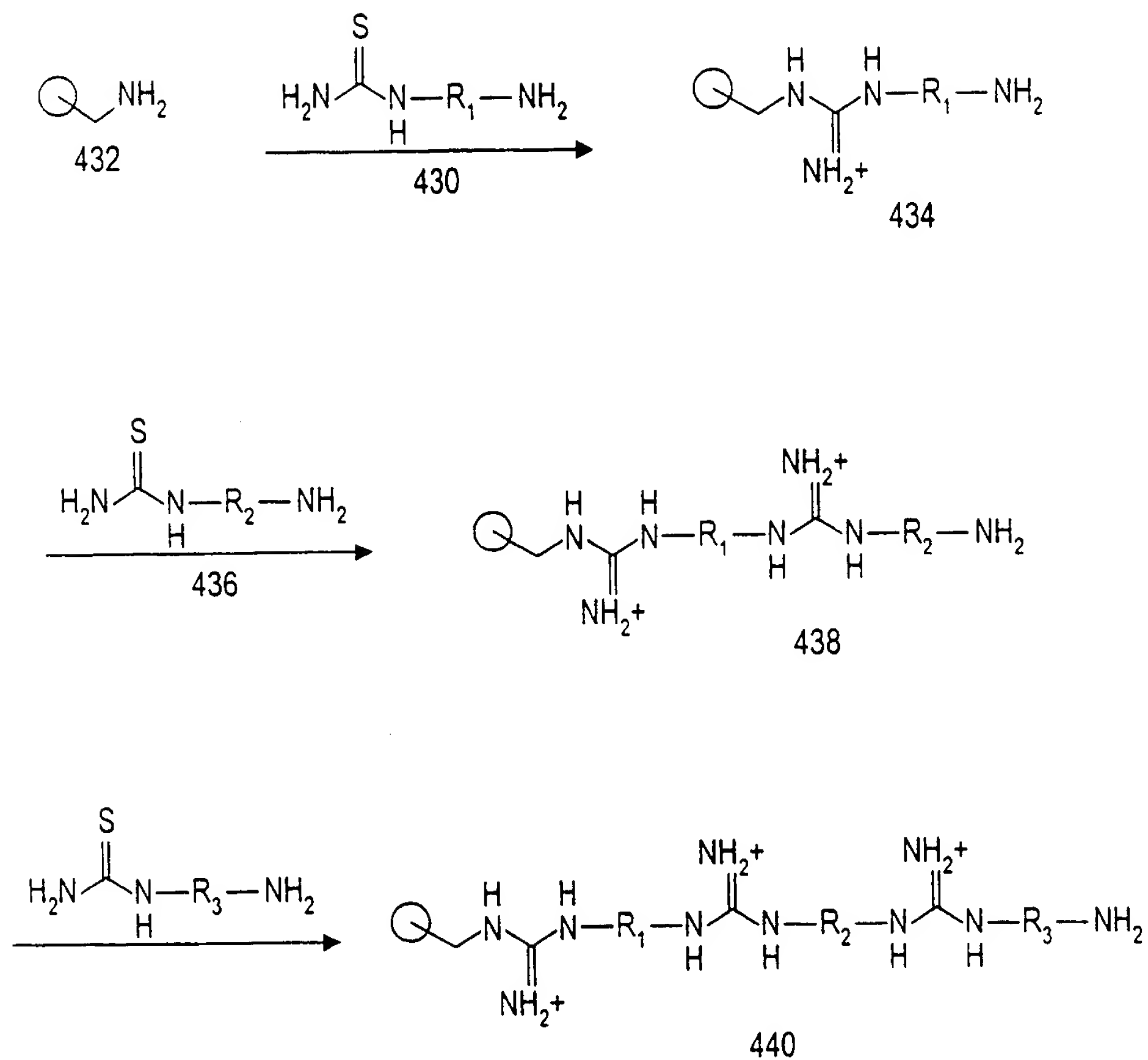


FIG. 12

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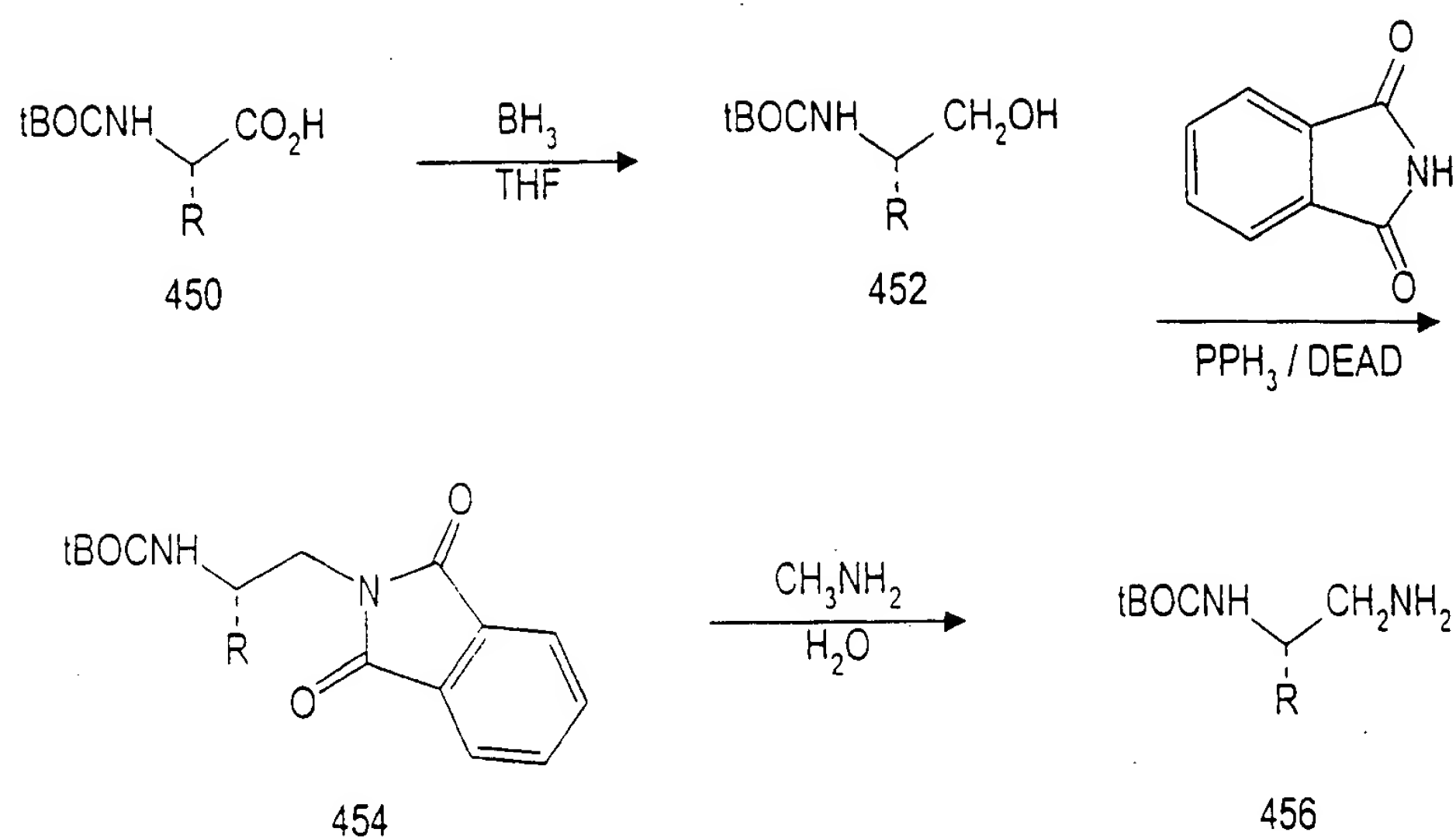


FIG. 13

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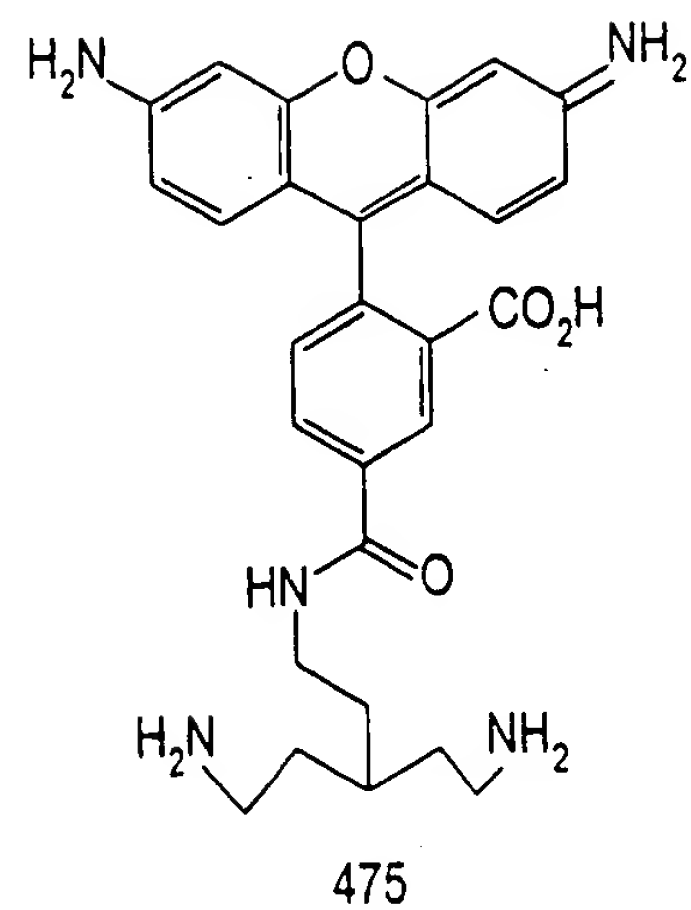
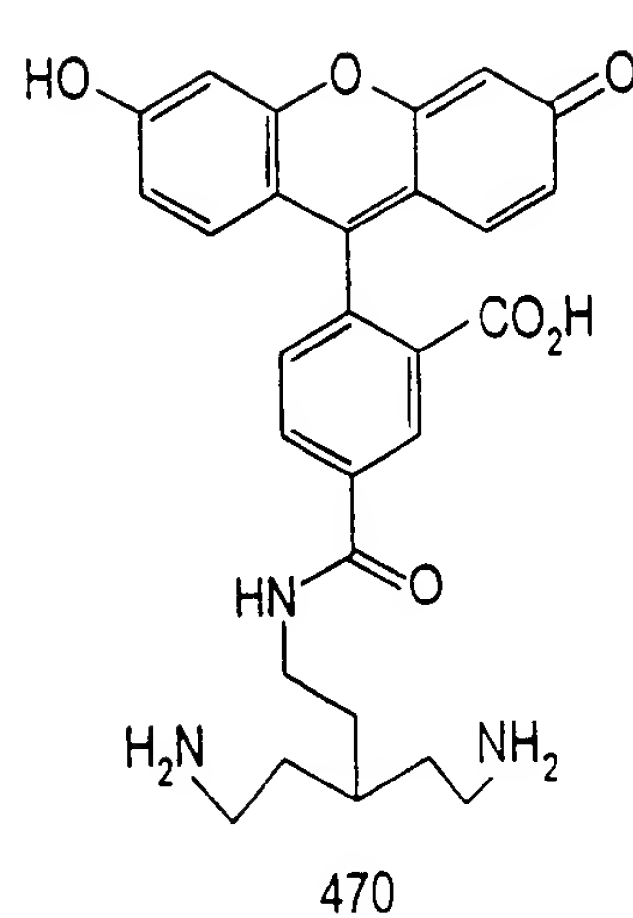


FIG. 14

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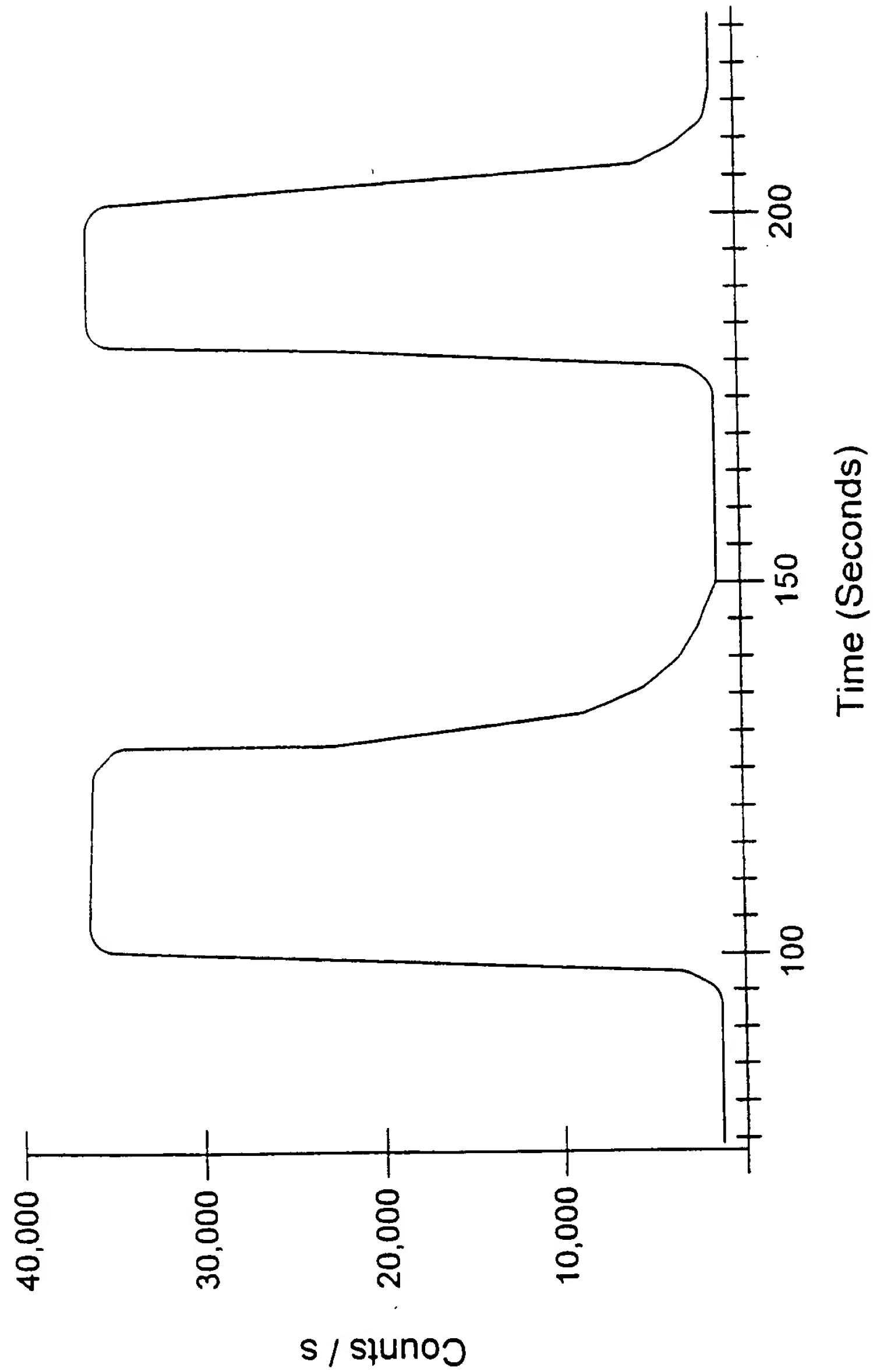


FIG. 15

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| RESIN: pH Ion | | Blank | Alizarin | o-Cresol- phthalein | Fluorescein | Alizarin-Ce ³⁺ complex |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------|----------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2 | none | | | | | |
| 2 | Ca ²⁺ | | | | | |
| 7 | none | | | | | |
| 7 | Ca ²⁺ | | | | | |
| 7 | F ⁻ | | | | | |
| 12 | none | | | | | |
| 12 | Ca ²⁺ | | | | | |
| 12 | F ⁻ | | | | | |

FIG. 16

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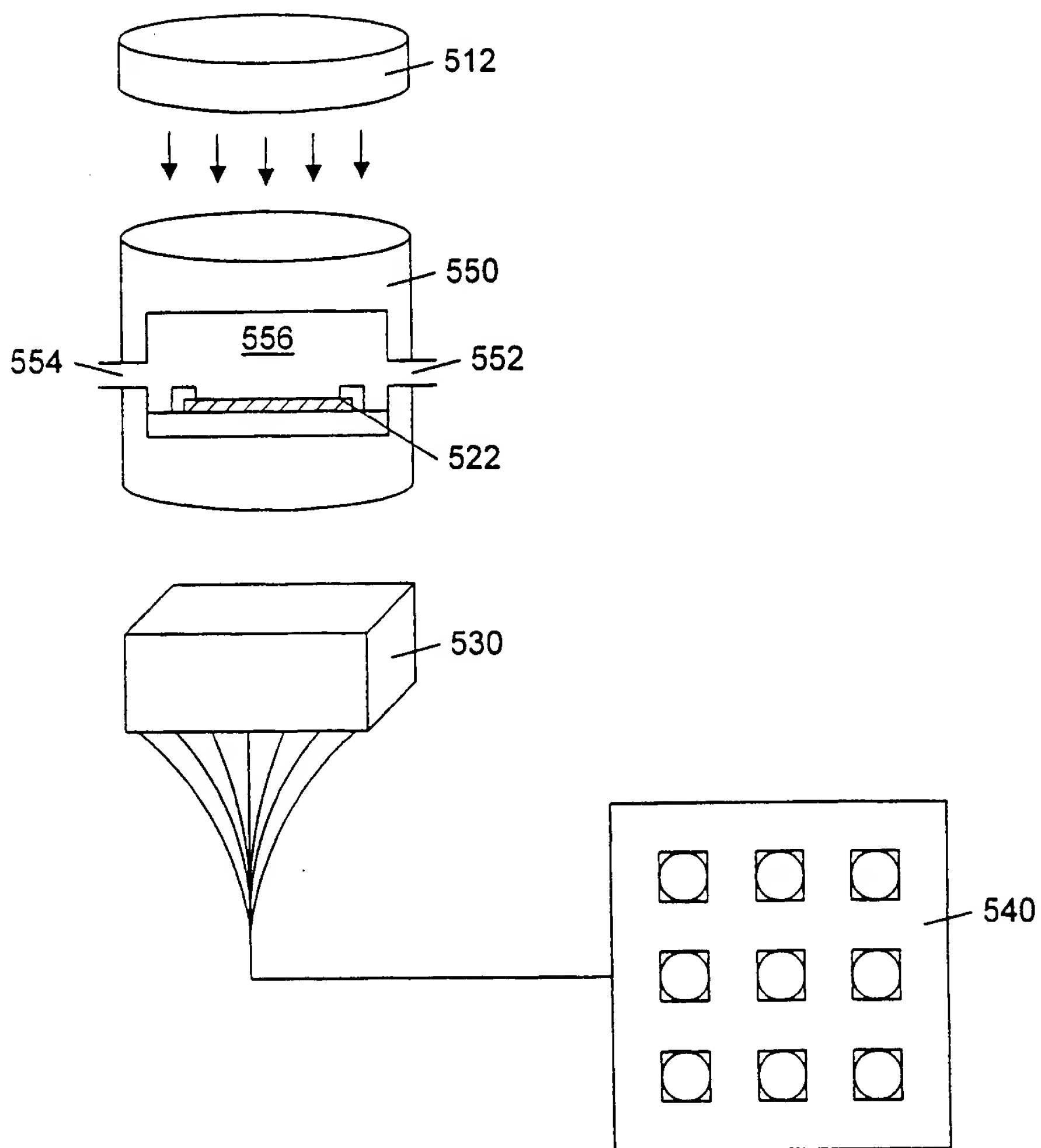


FIG. 17

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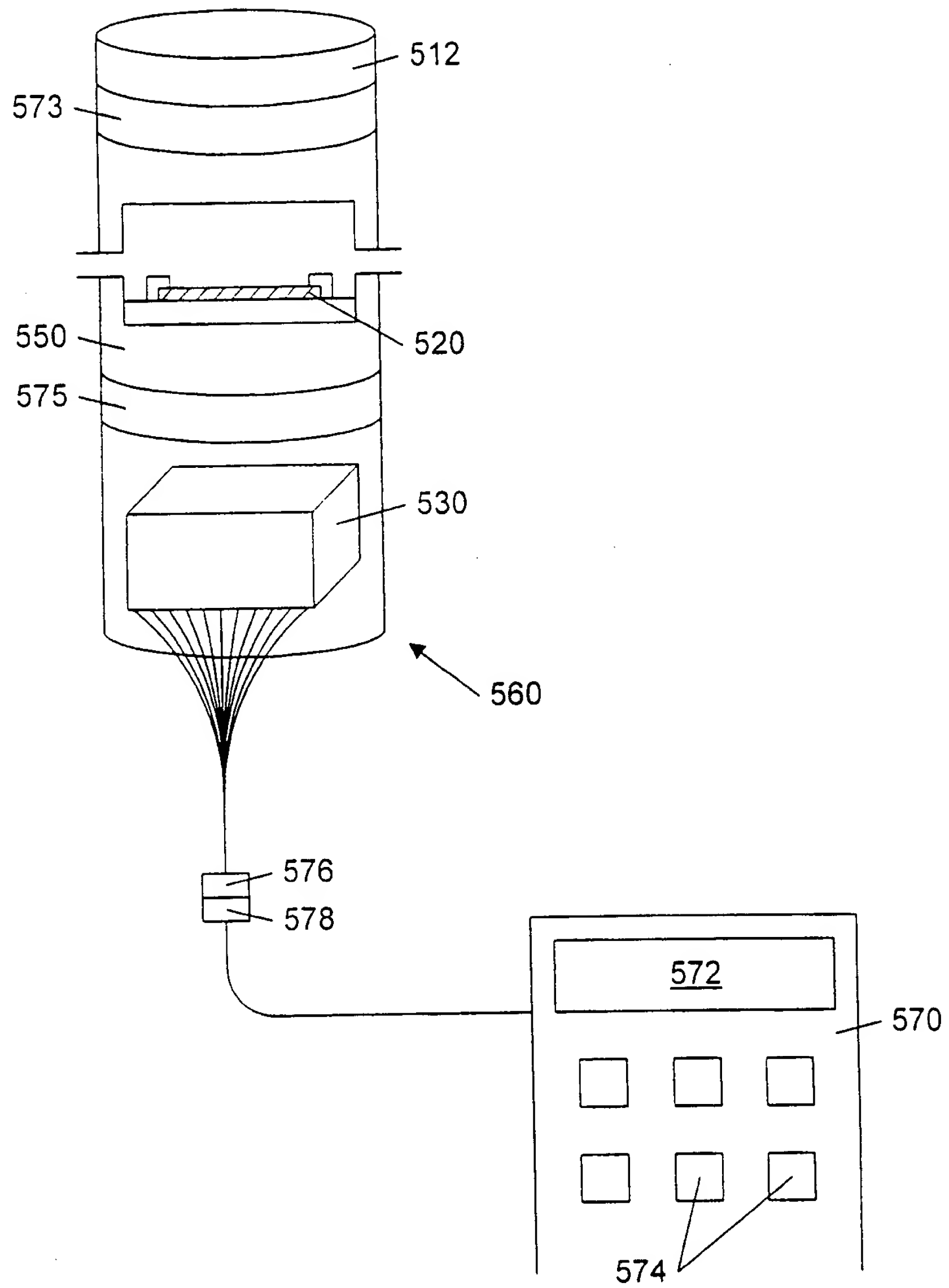


FIG. 18

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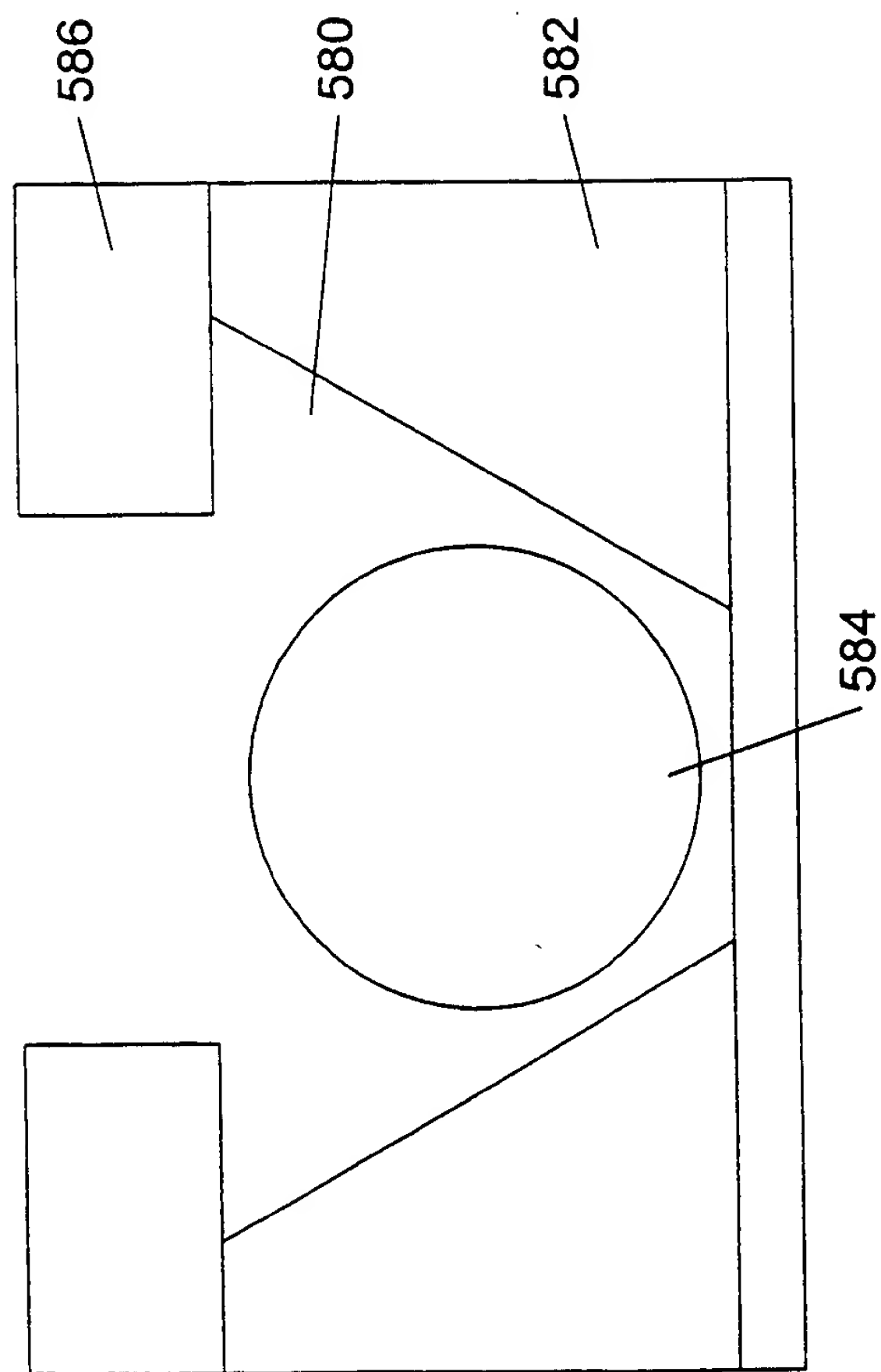


FIG. 19

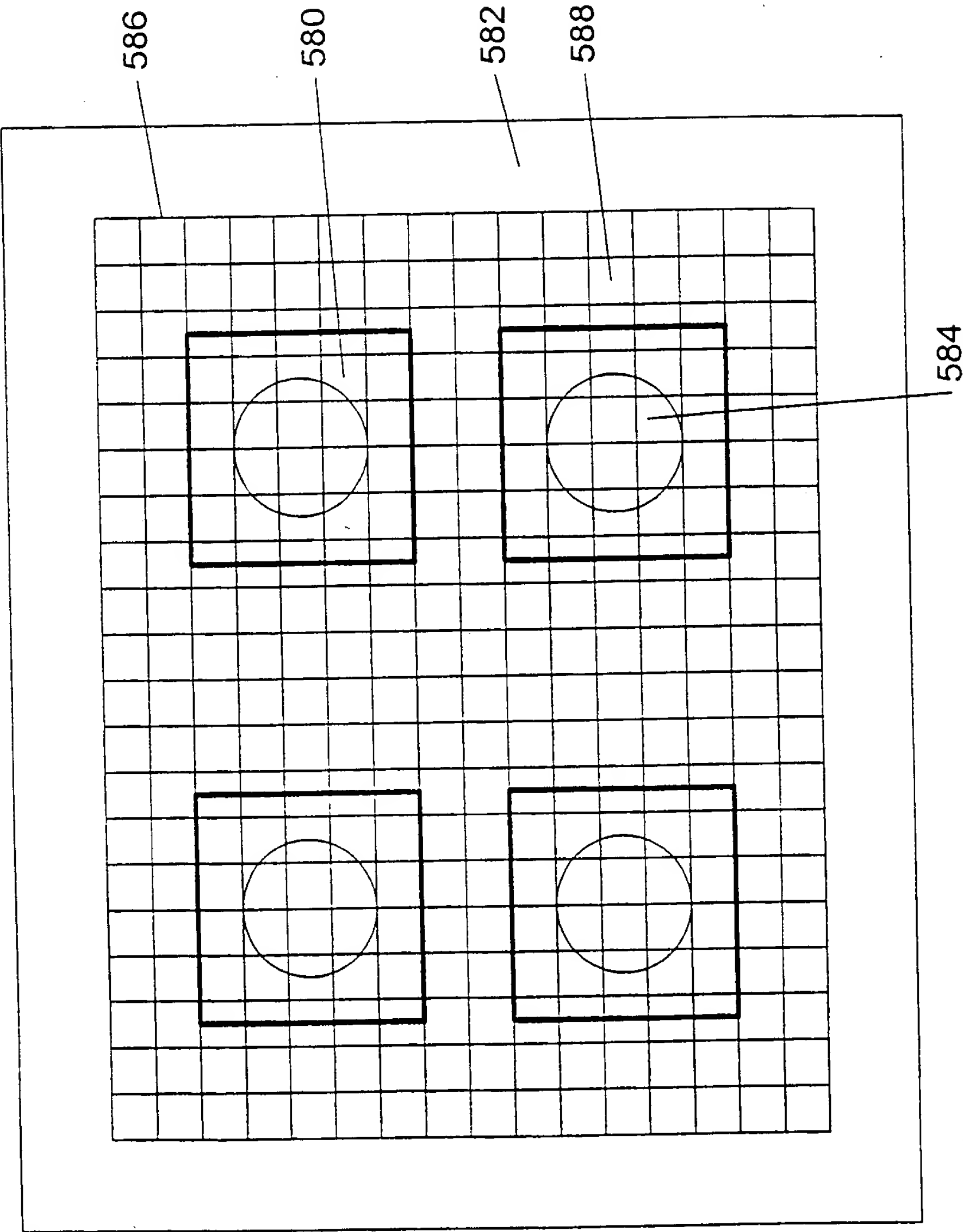


FIG. 20

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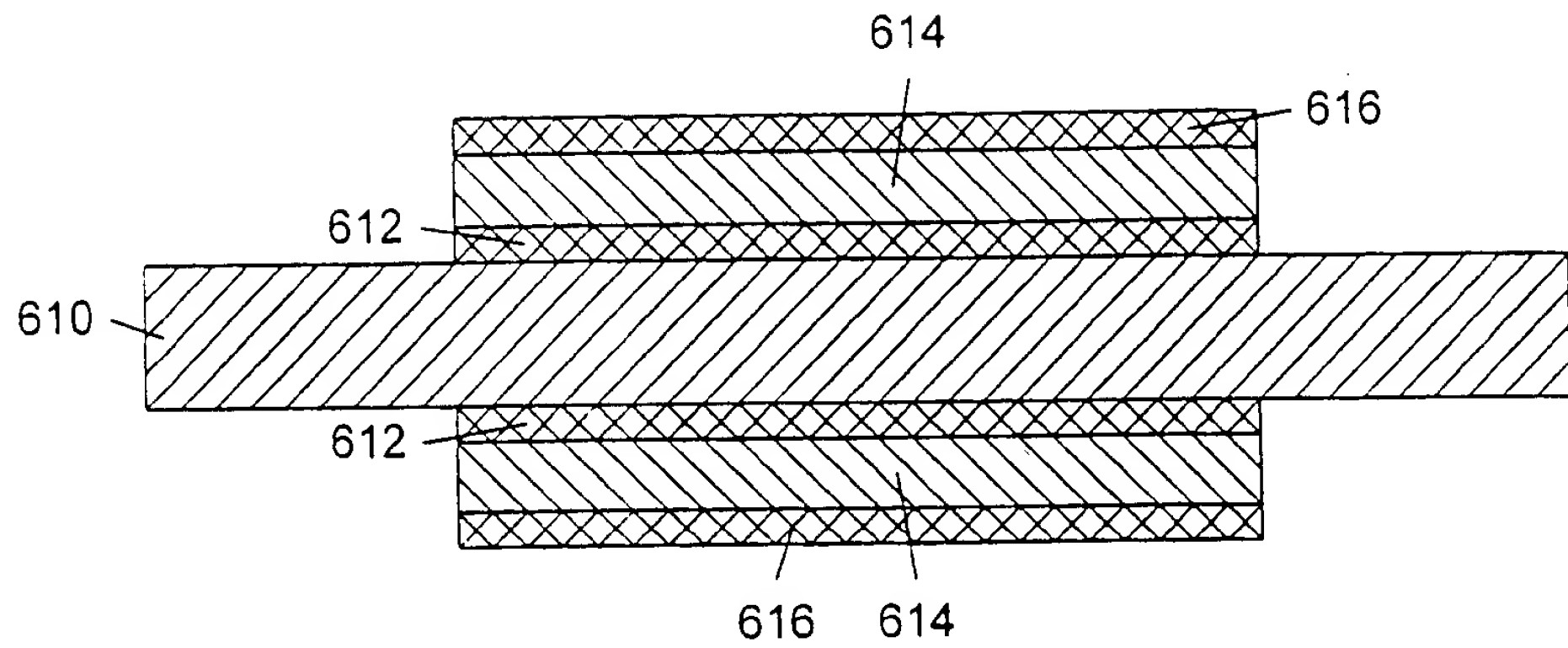


FIG. 21A

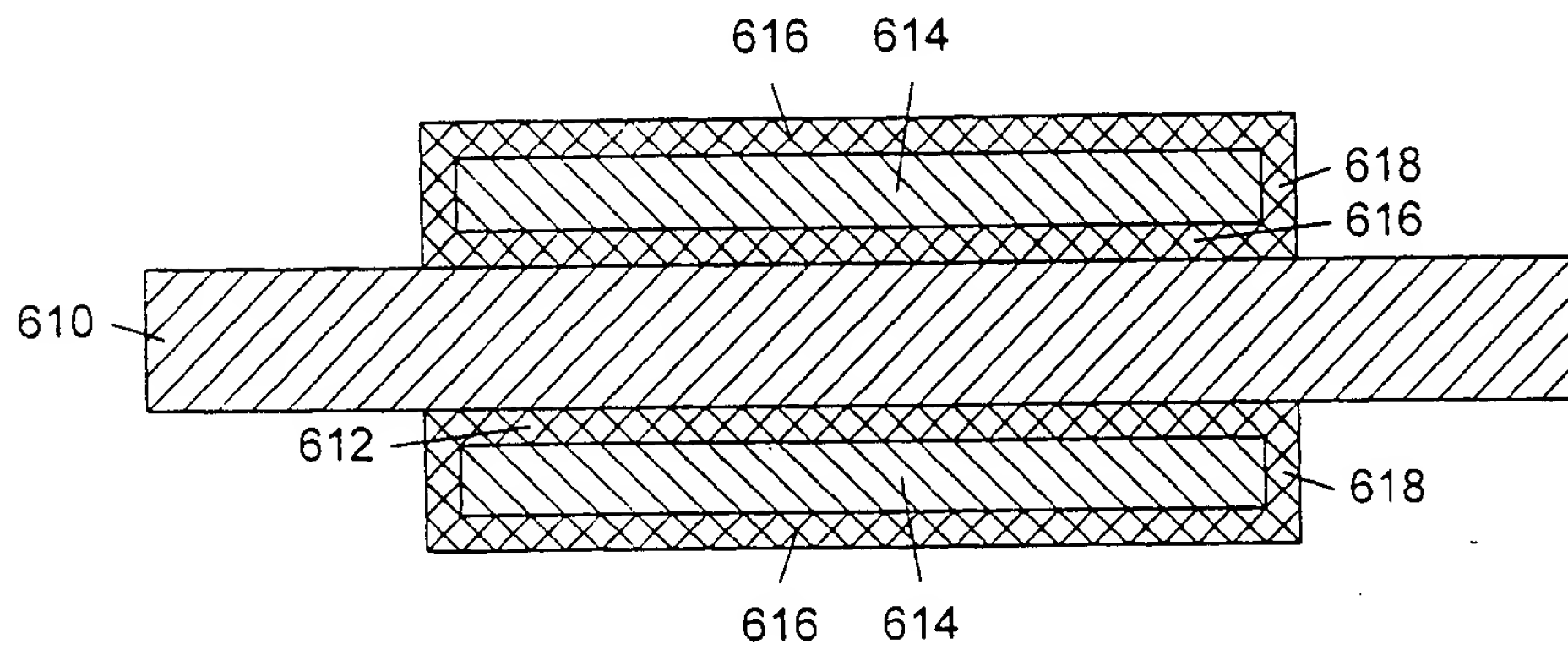


FIG. 21B

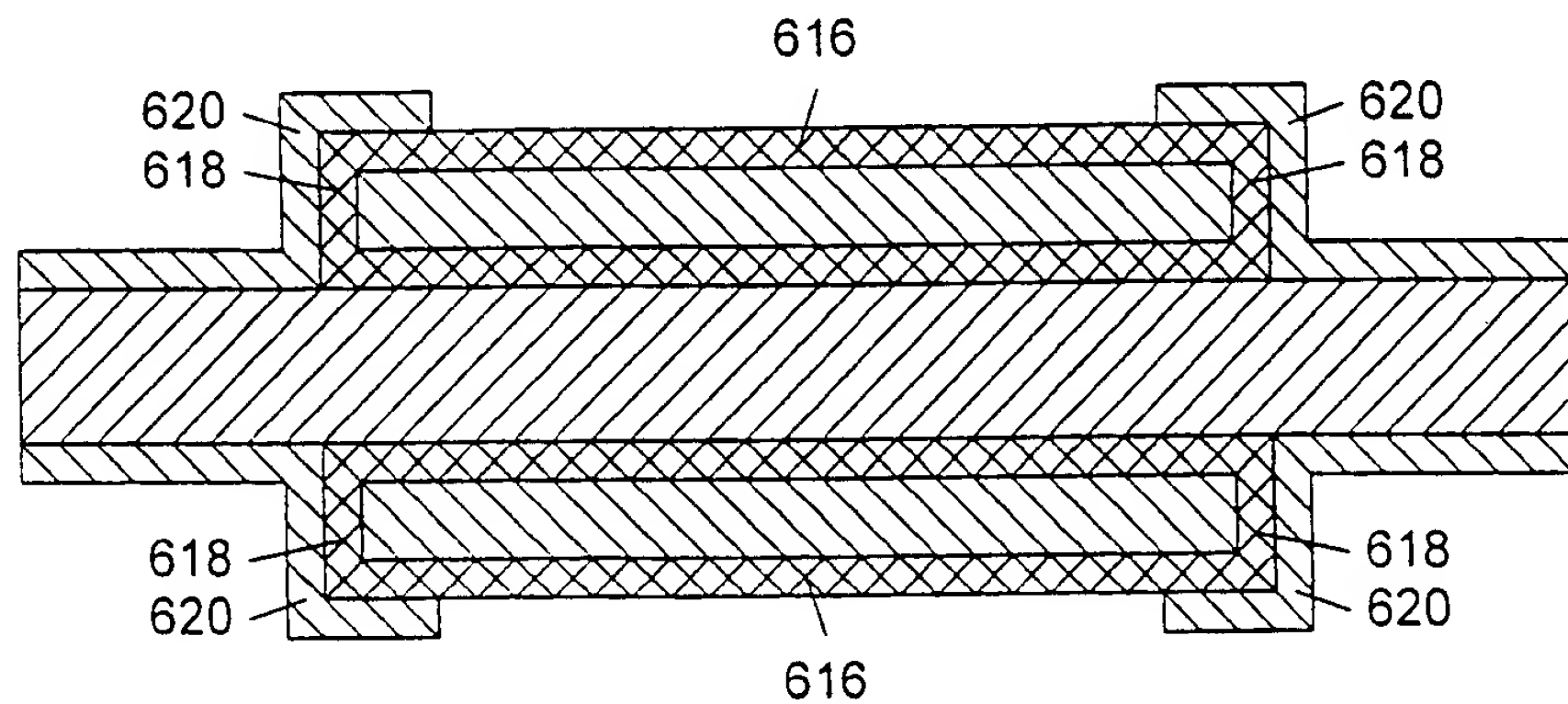


FIG. 21C

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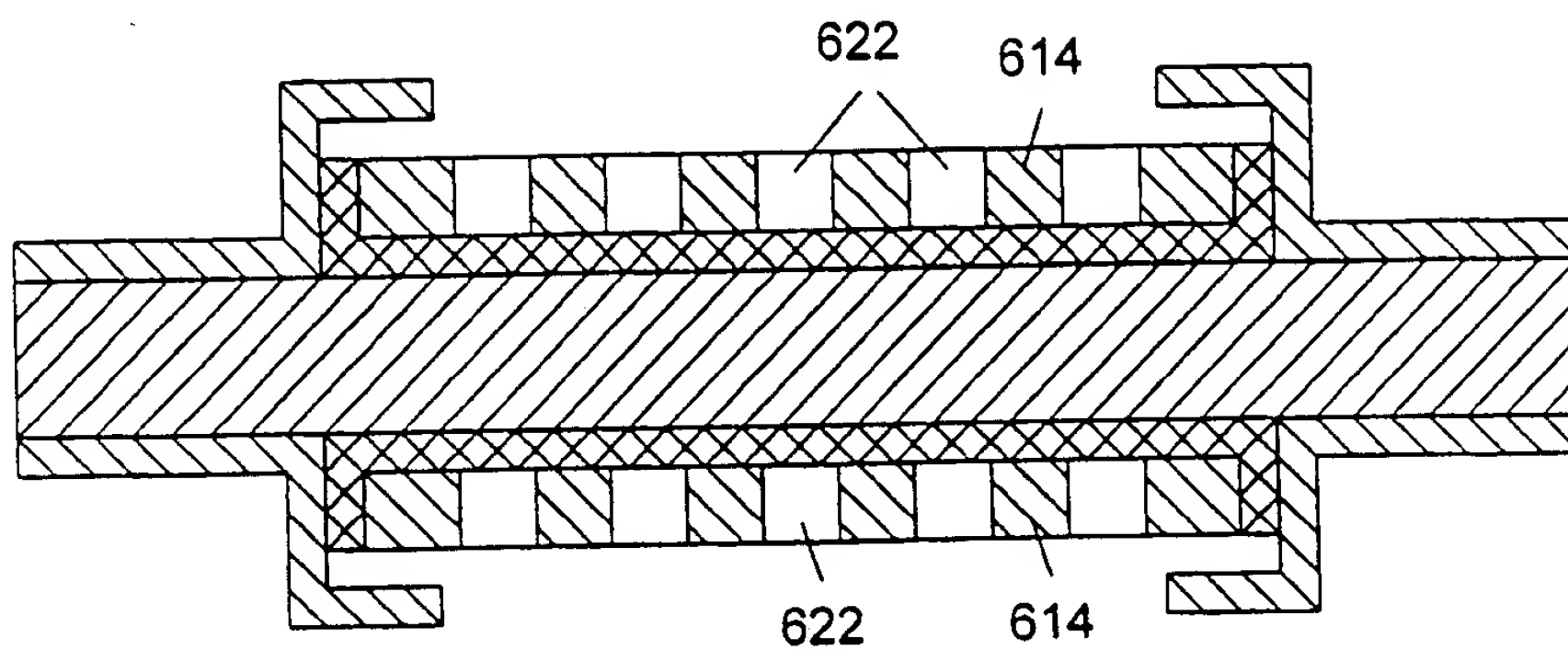


FIG. 21D

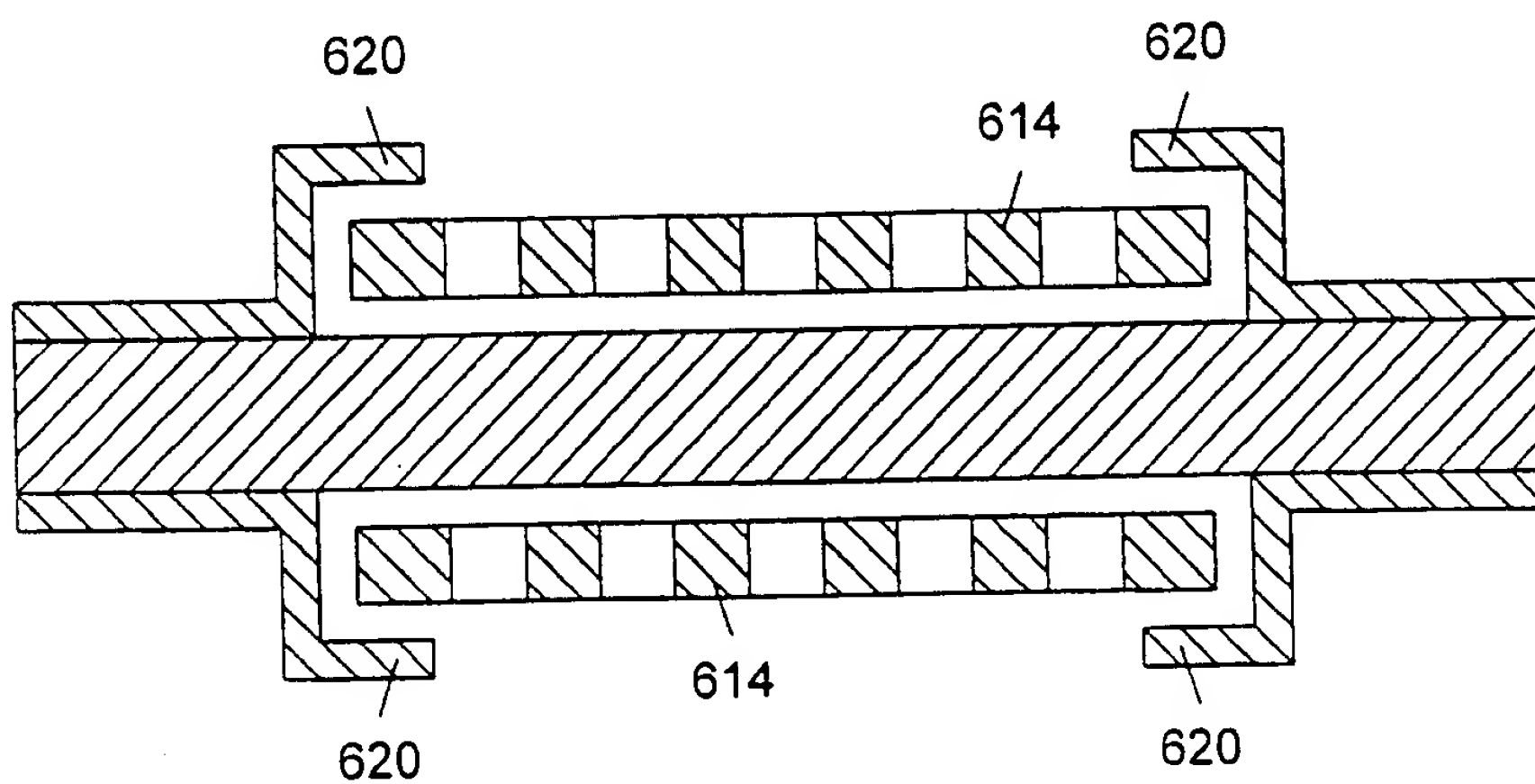


FIG. 21E

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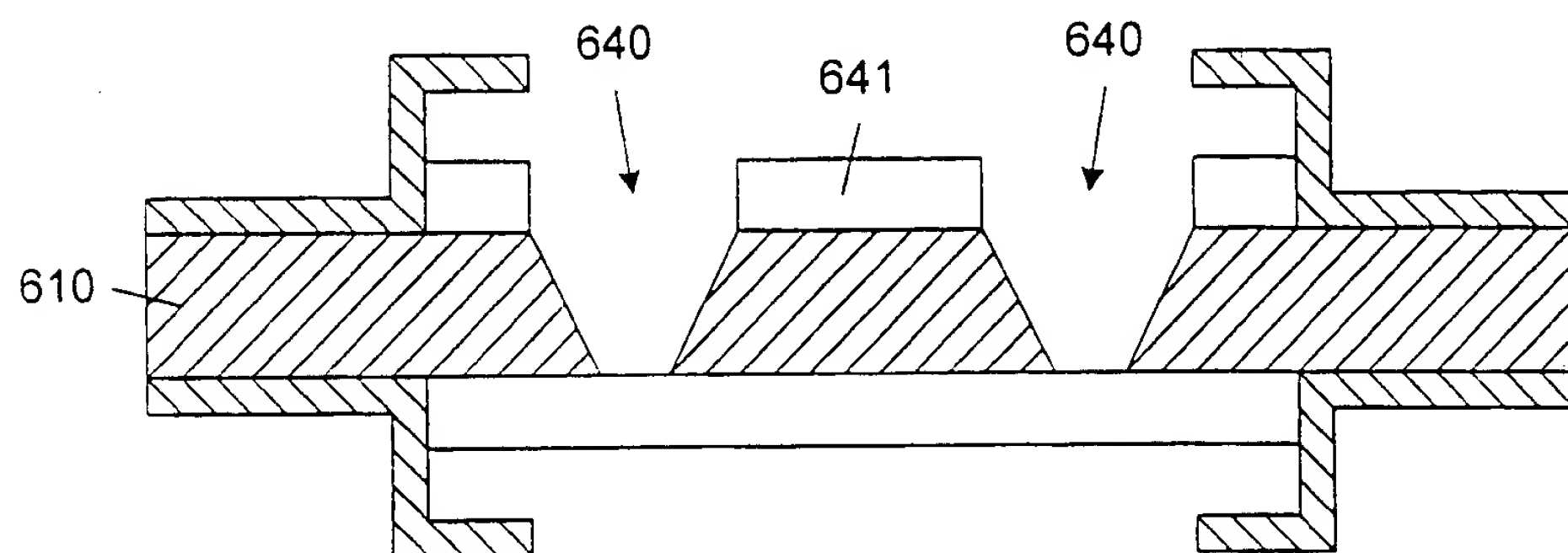


FIG. 21F

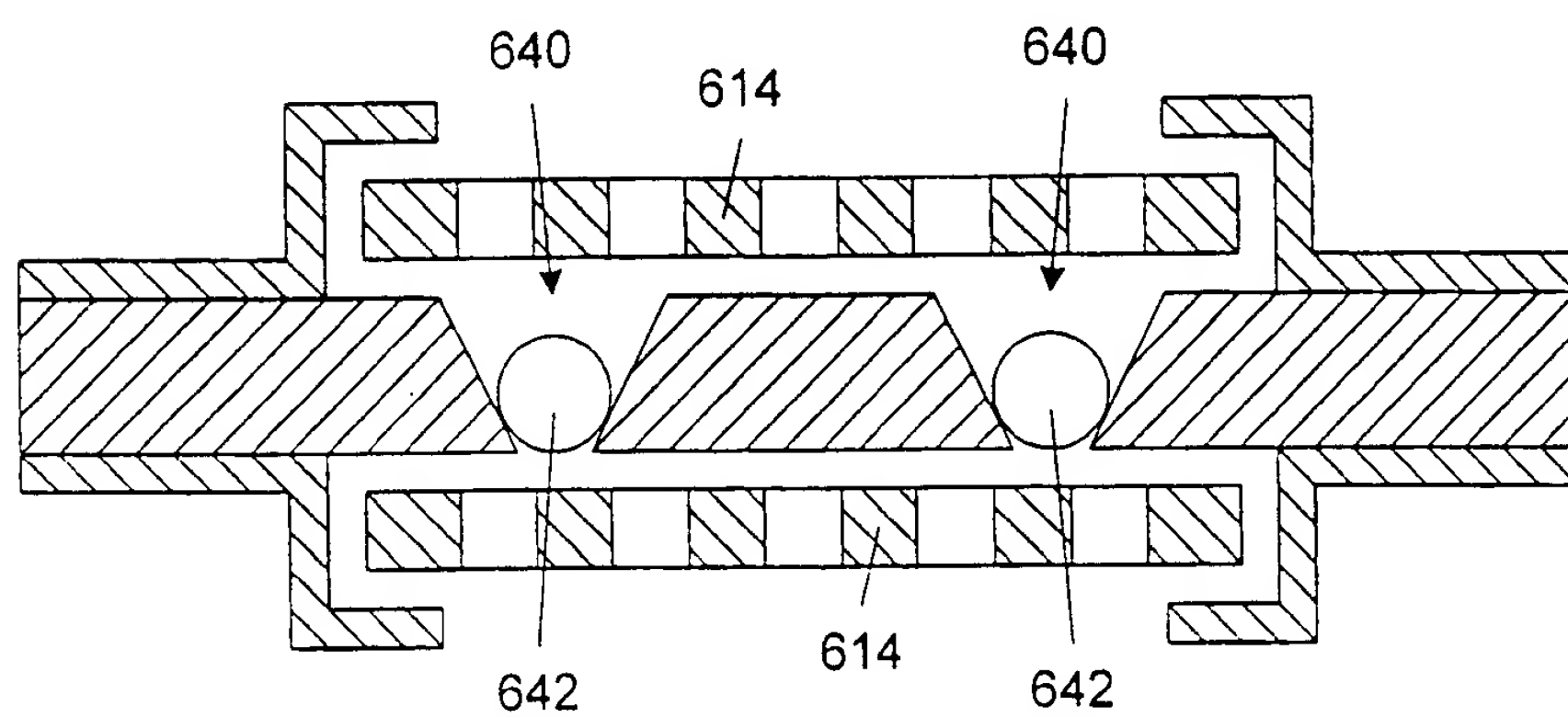


FIG. 21G

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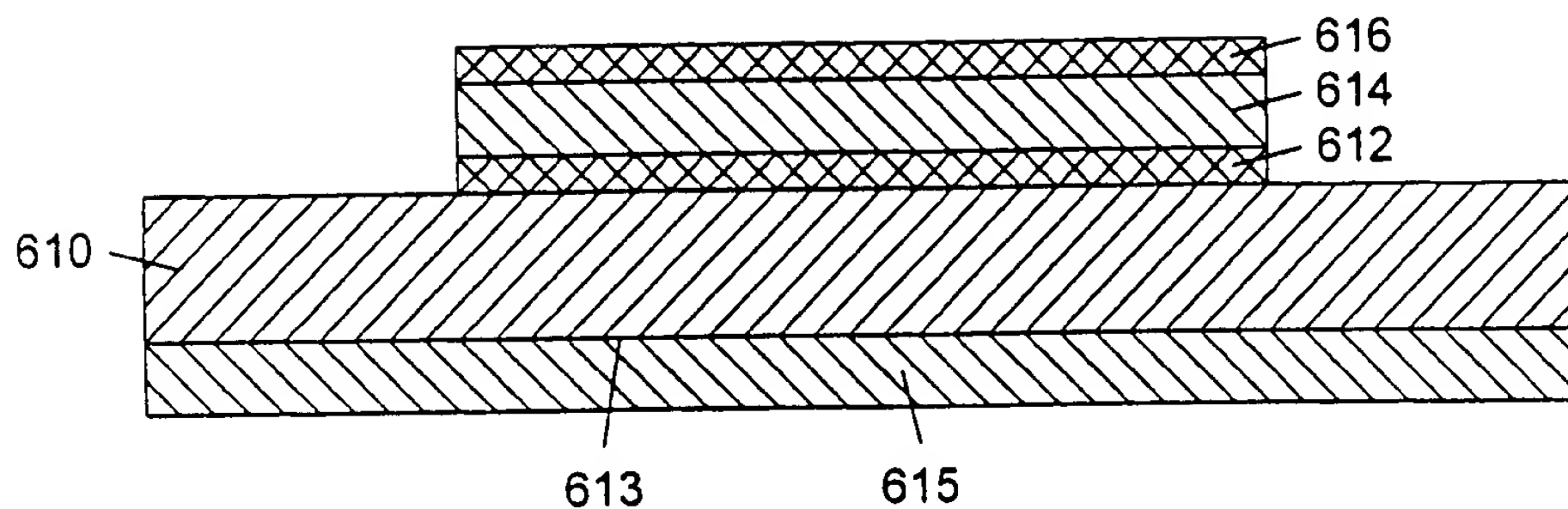


FIG. 22A

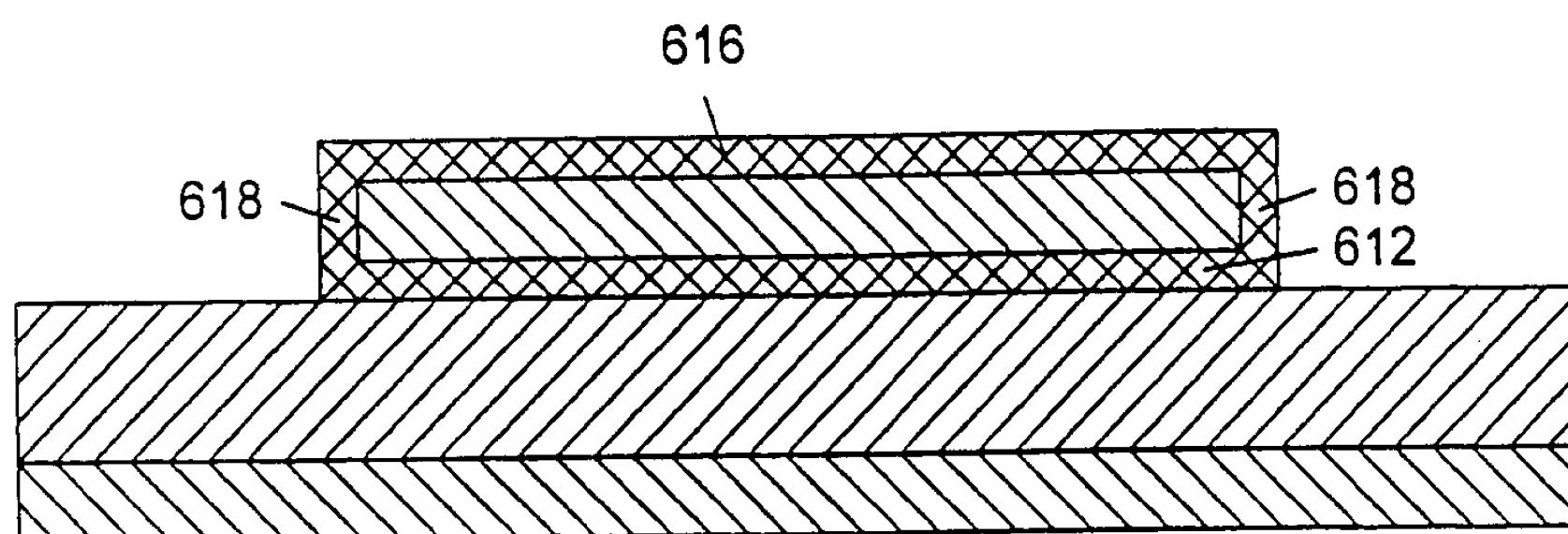


FIG. 22B

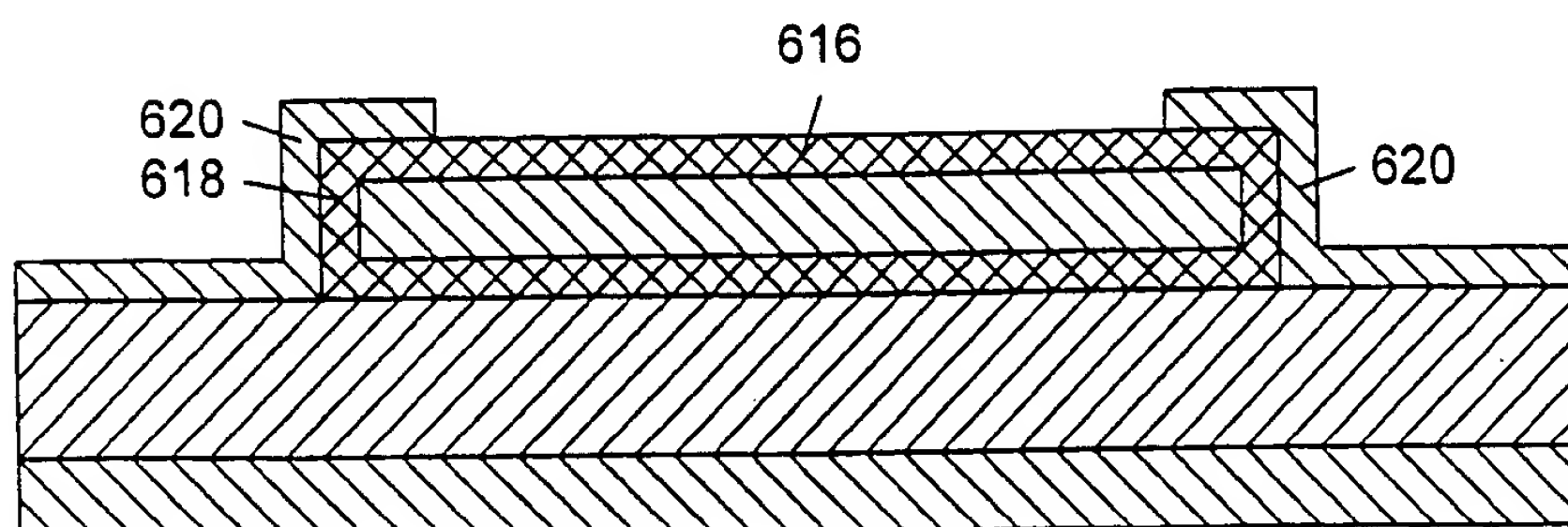


FIG. 22C

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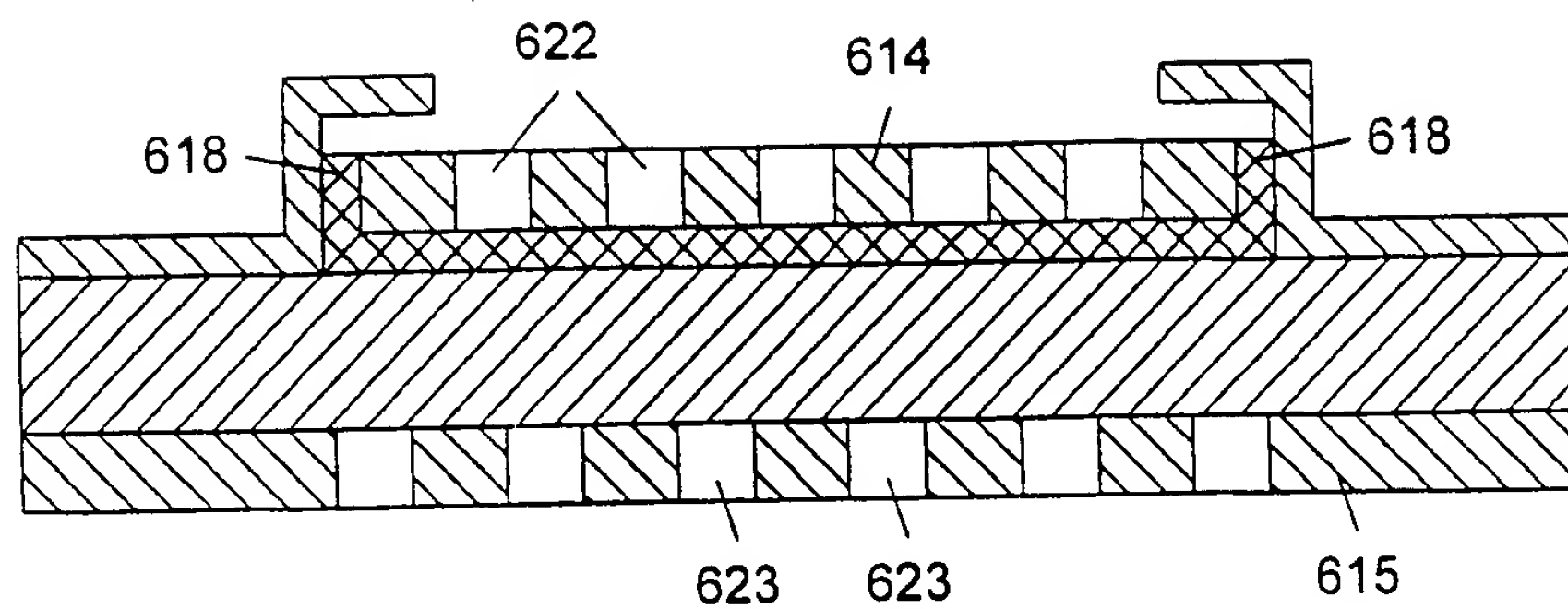


FIG. 22D

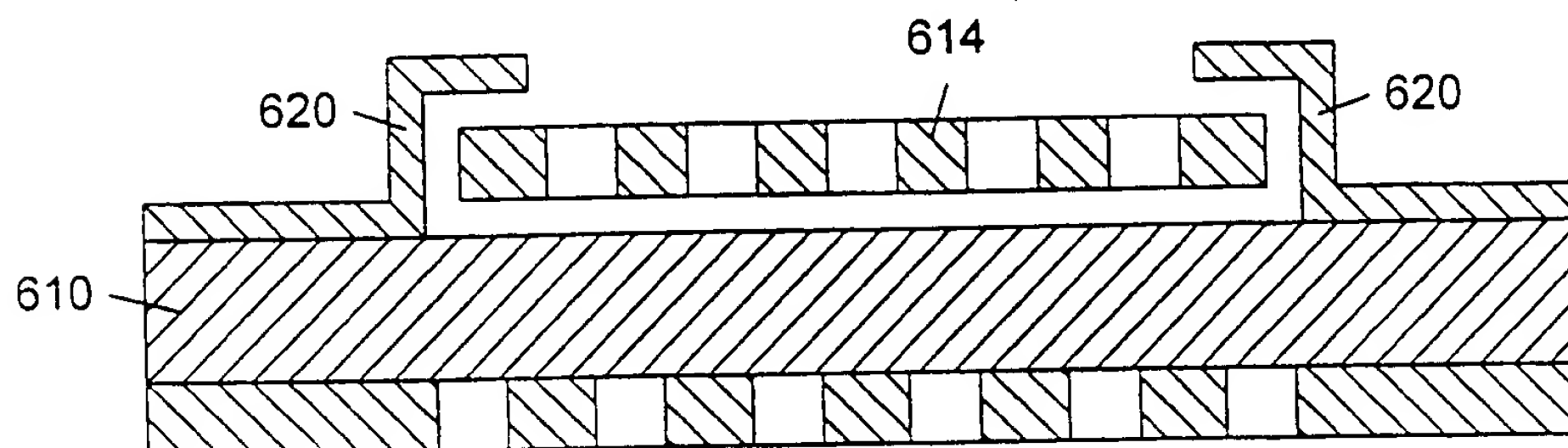


FIG. 22E

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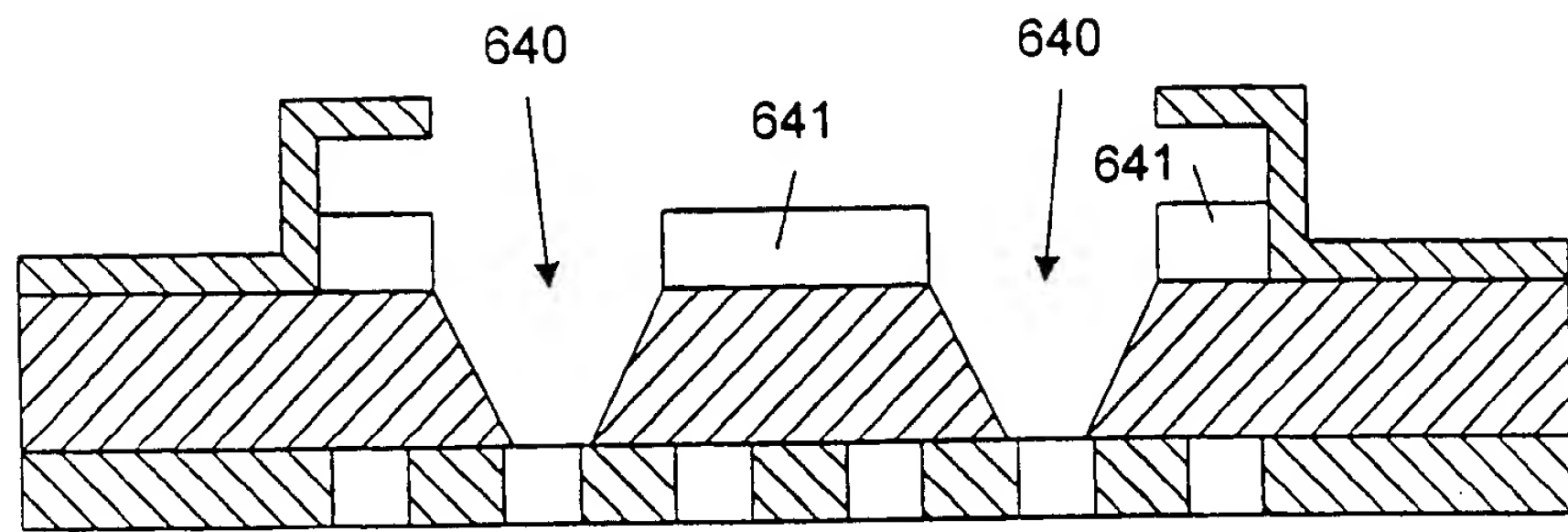


FIG. 22F

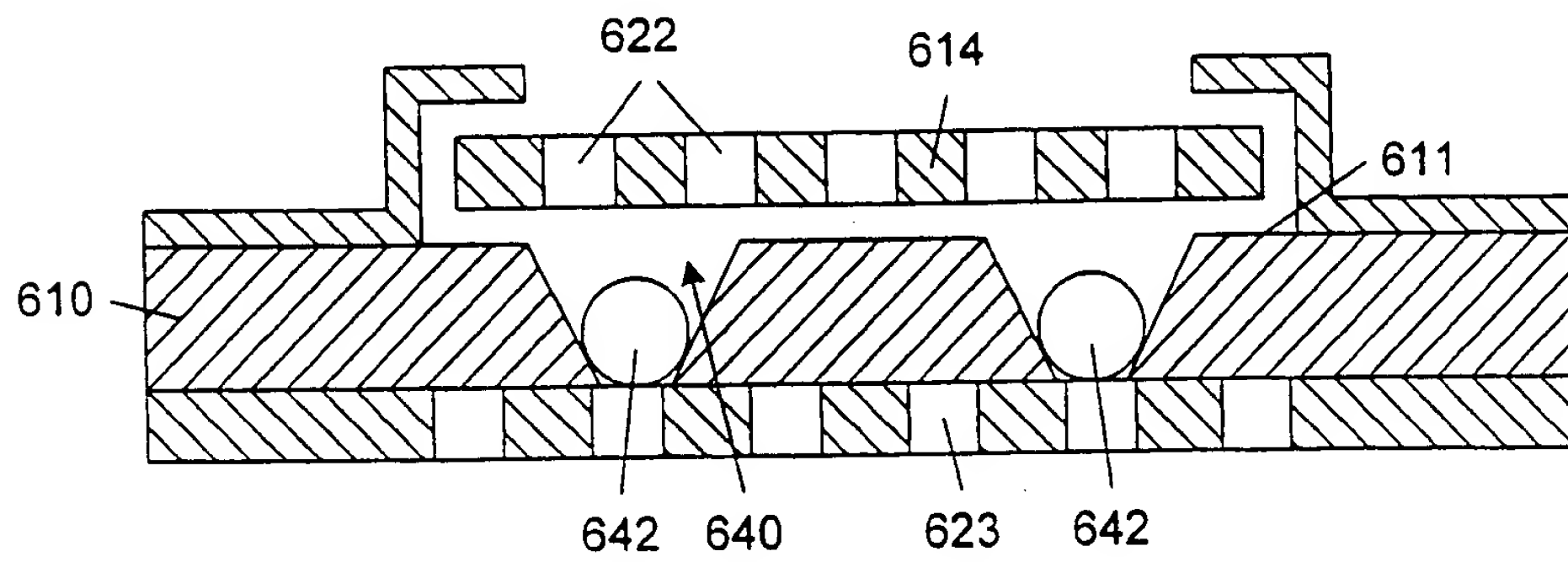


FIG. 22G

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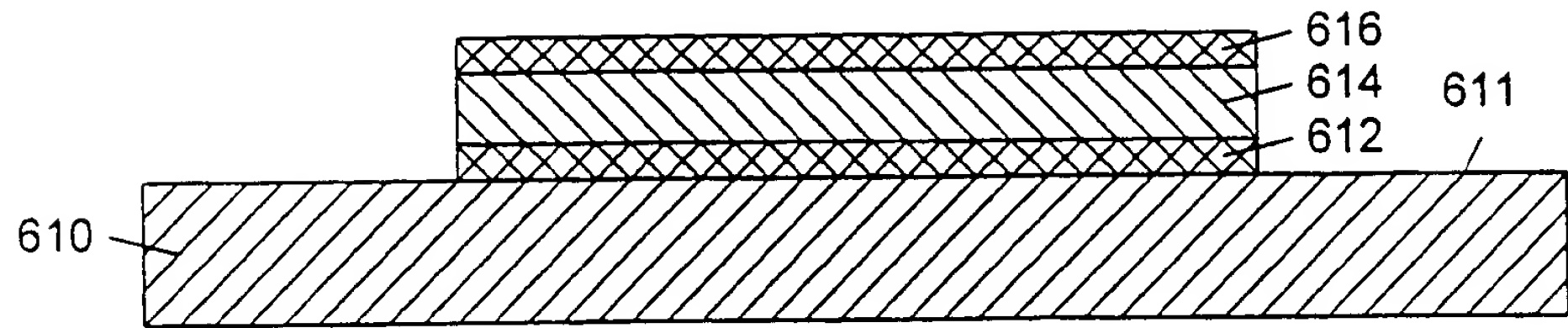


FIG. 23A

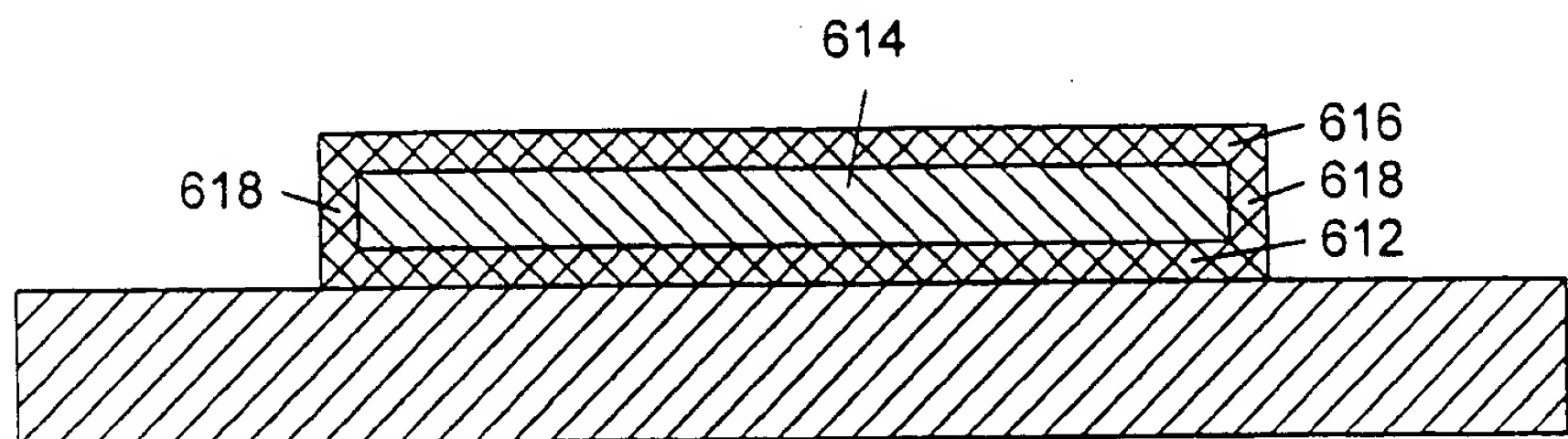


FIG. 23B

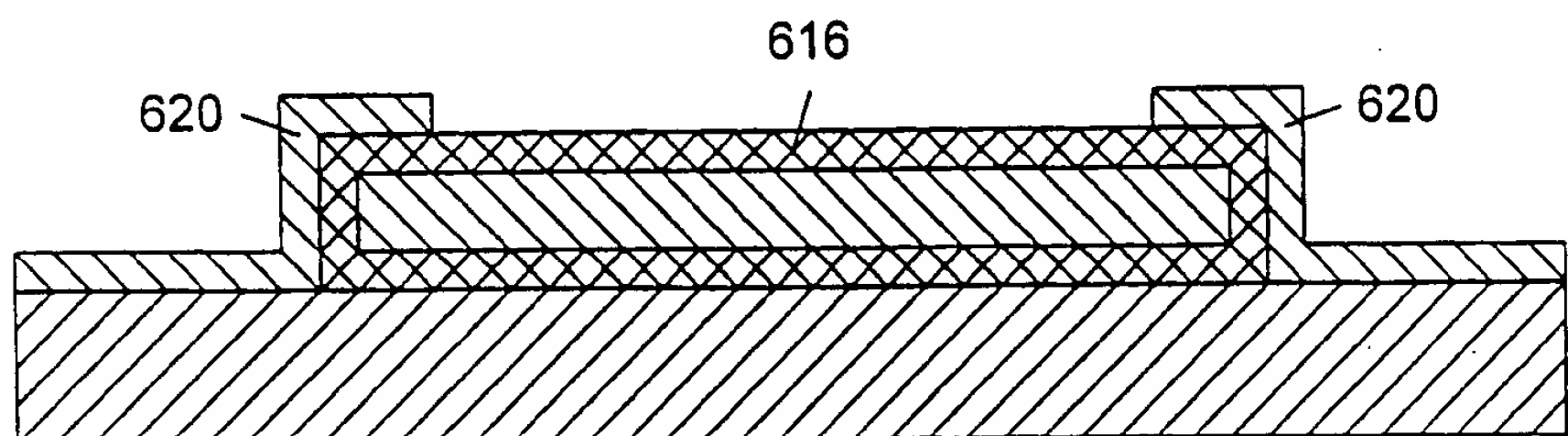


FIG. 23C

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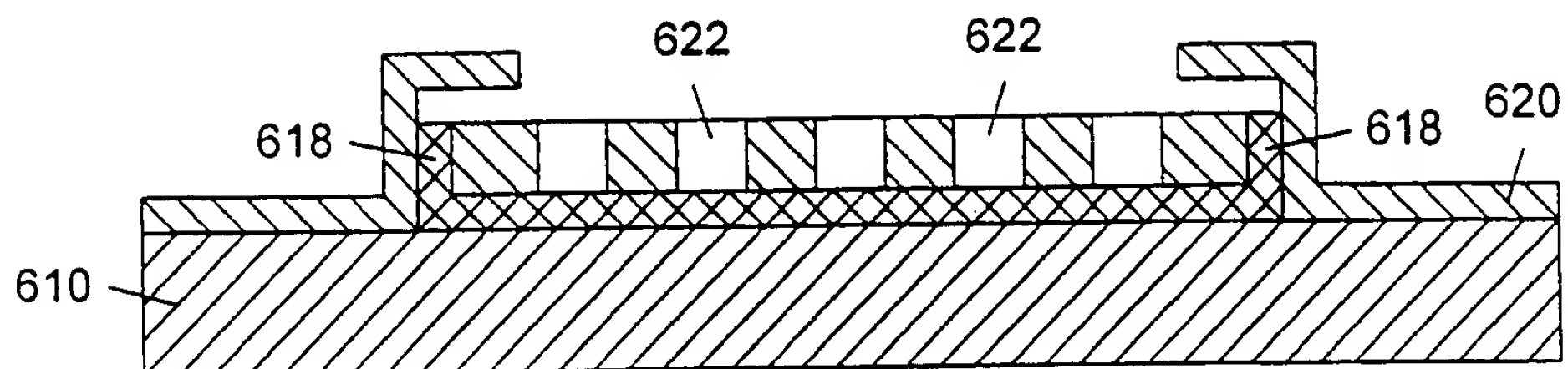


FIG. 23D

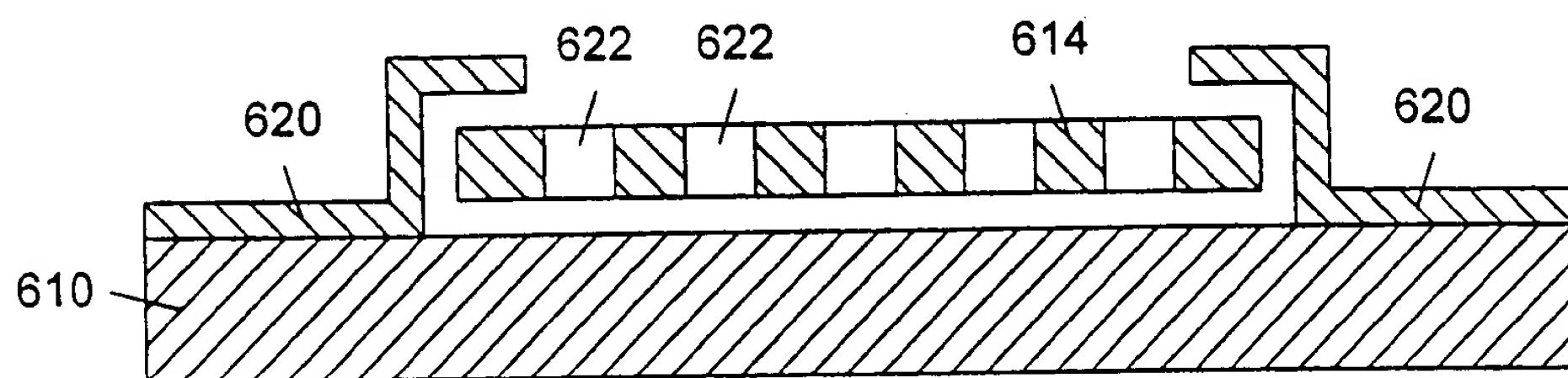


FIG. 23E

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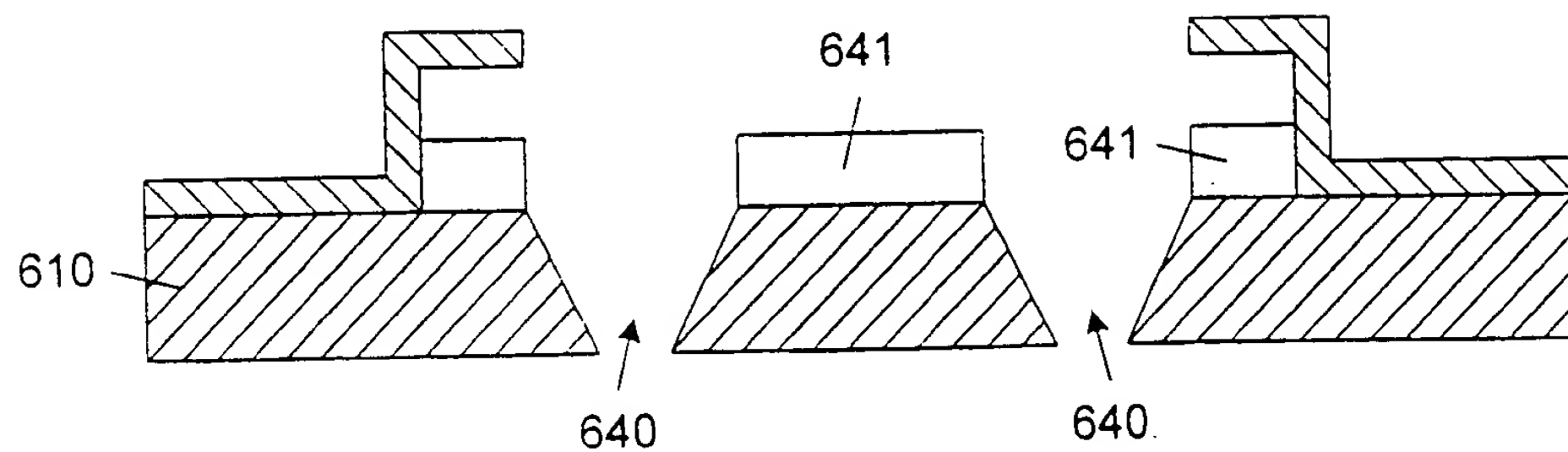


FIG. 23F

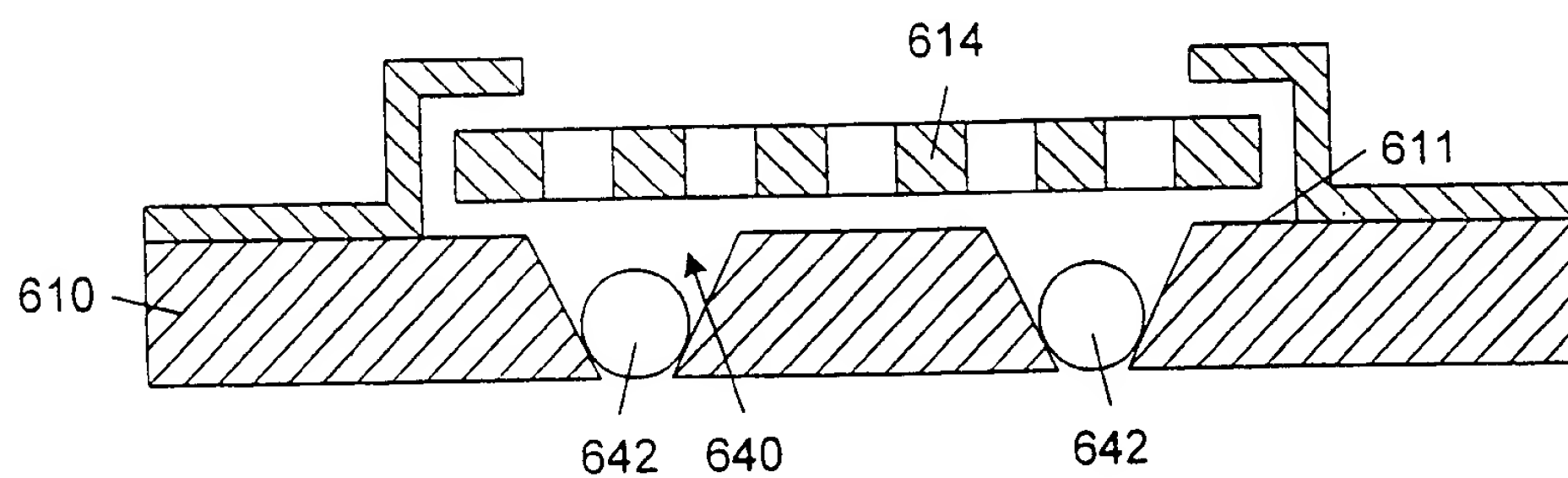


FIG. 23G

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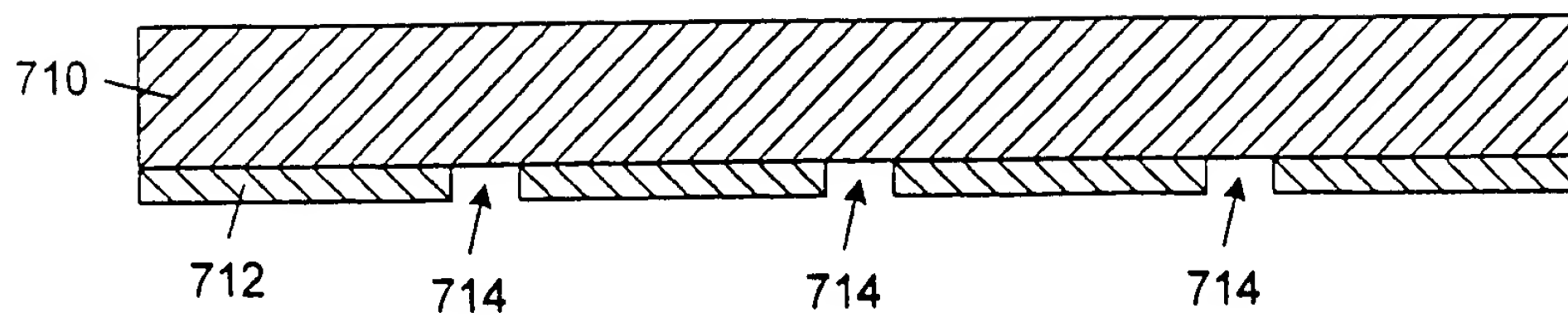


FIG. 24A

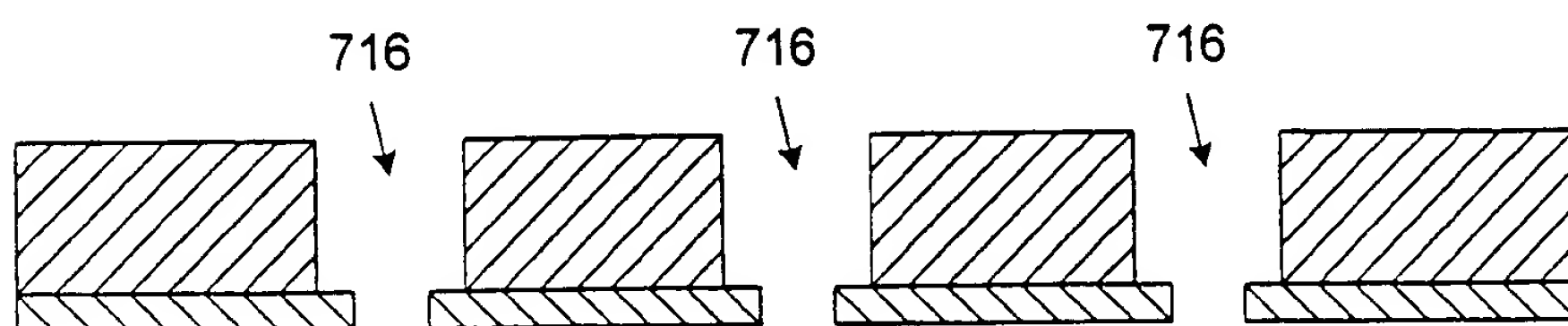


FIG. 24B

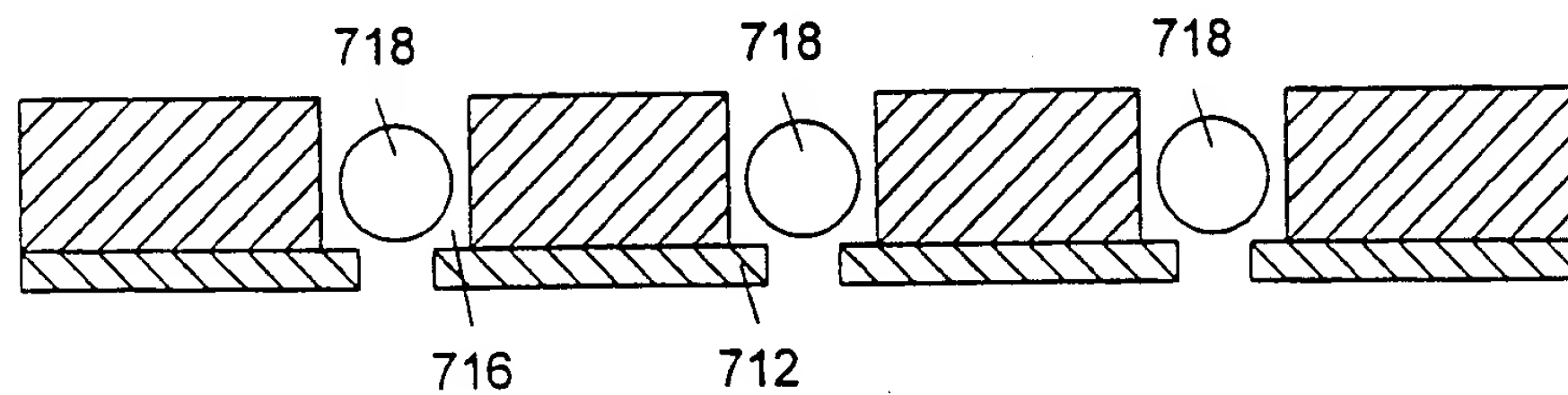


FIG. 24C

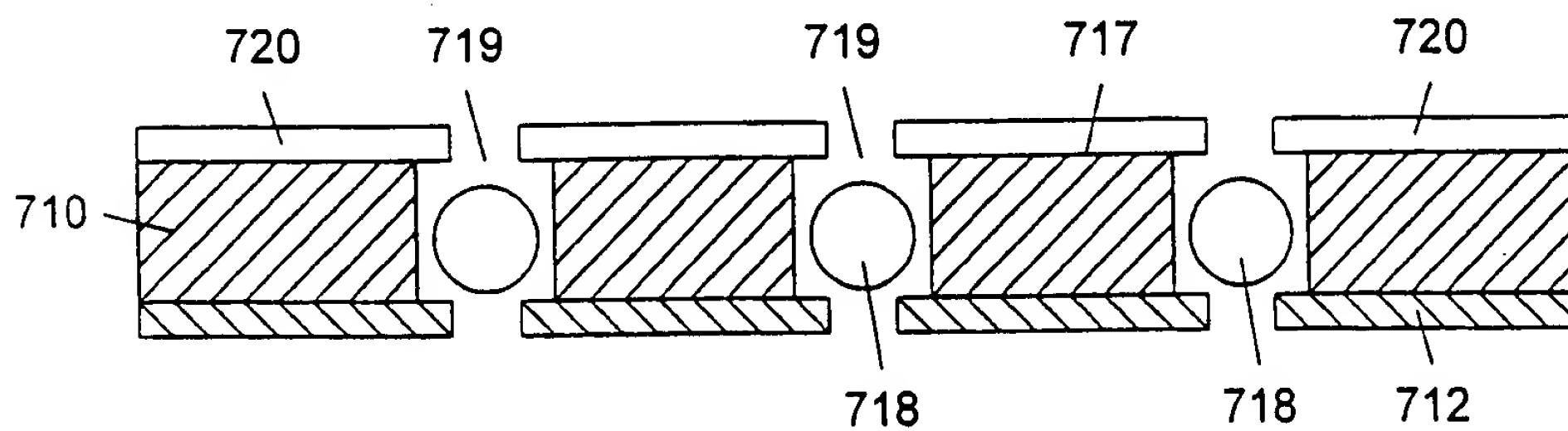


FIG. 24D

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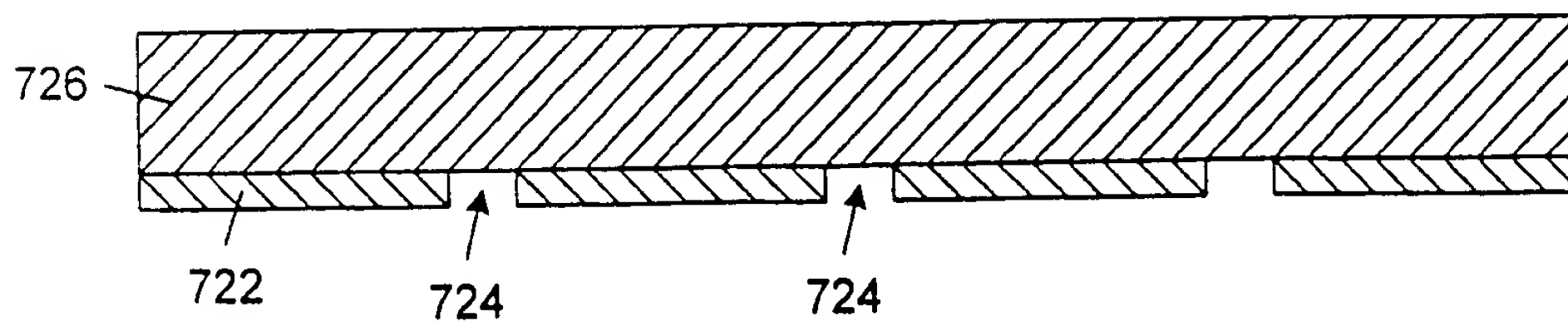


FIG. 25A

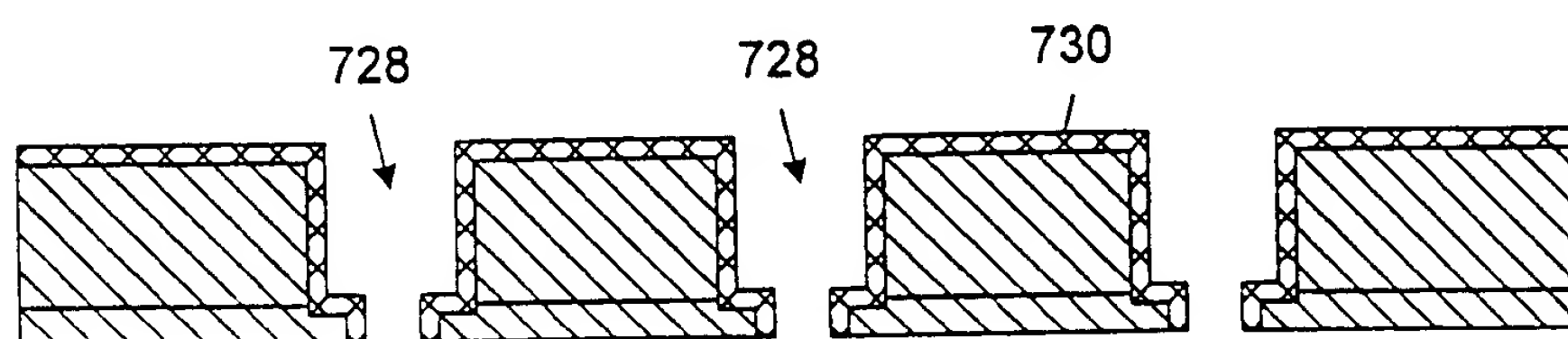


FIG. 25B

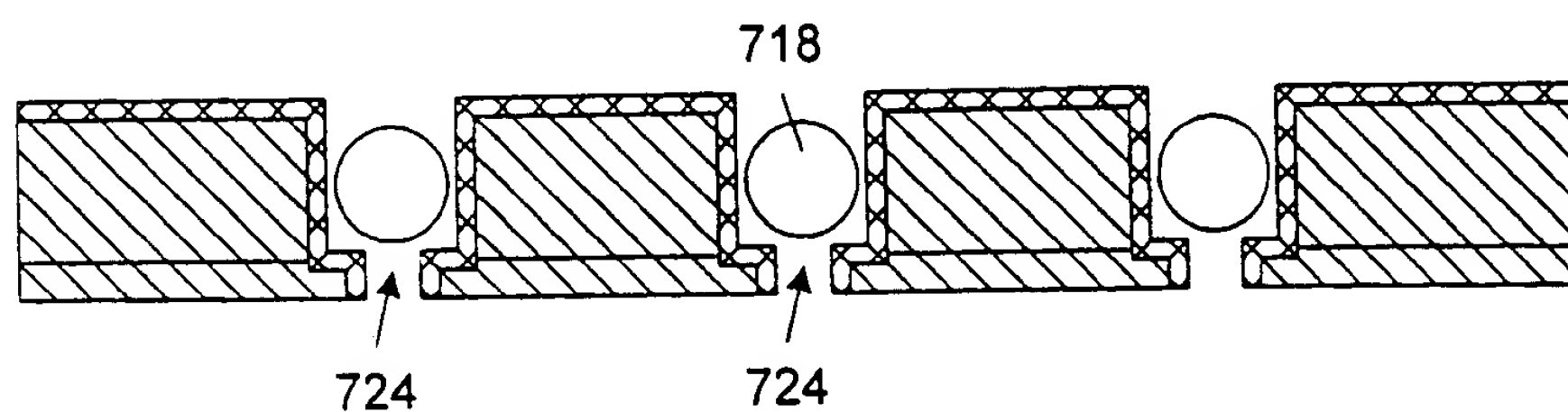


FIG. 25C

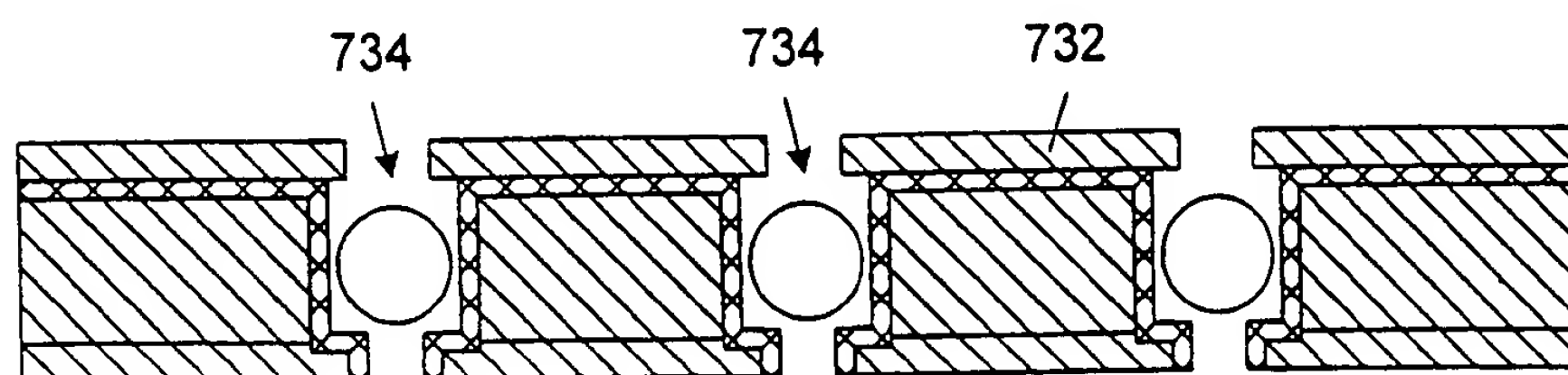


FIG. 25D

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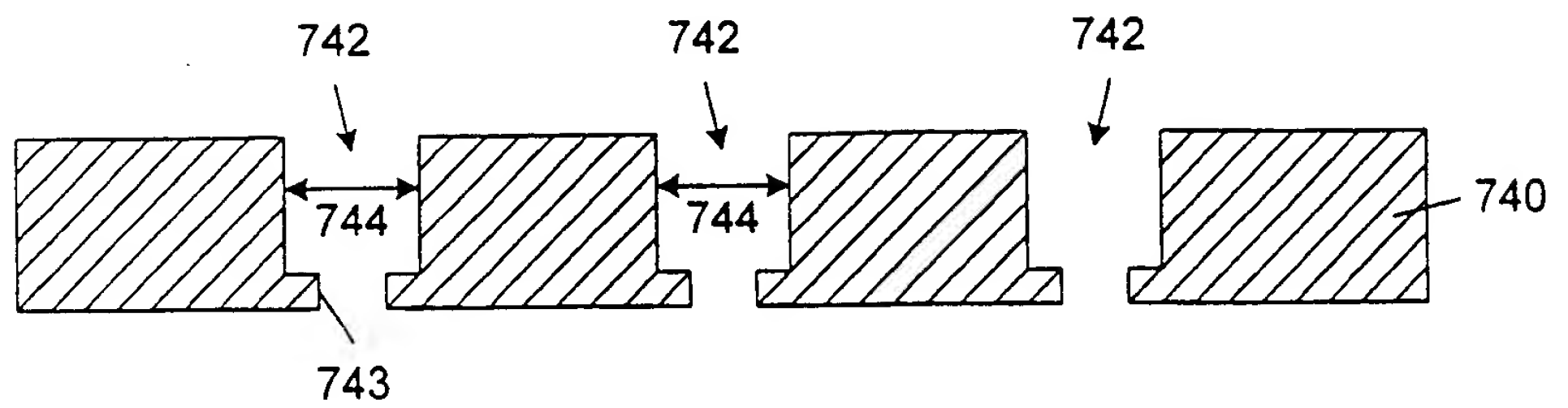


FIG. 26A

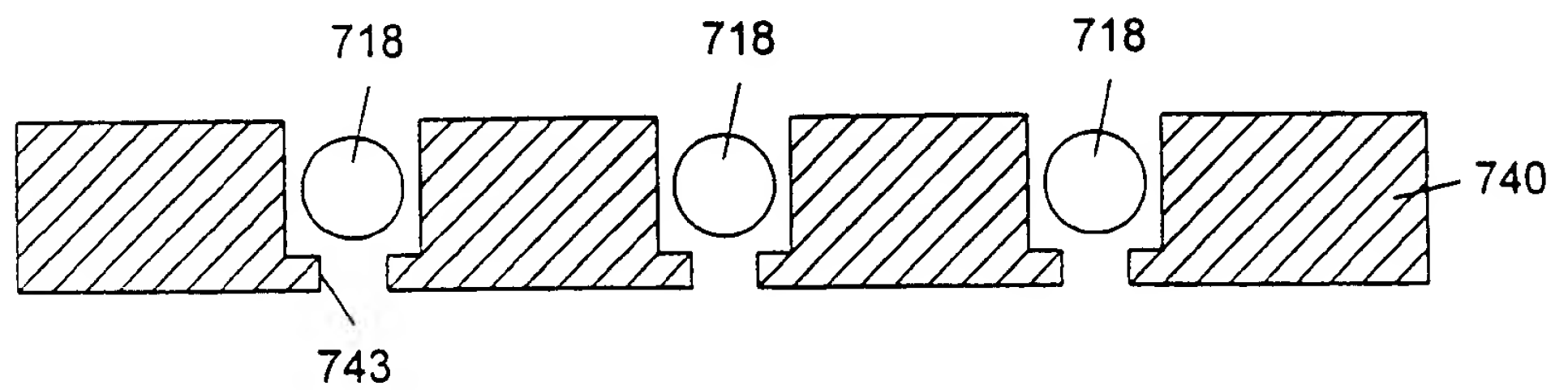


FIG. 26B

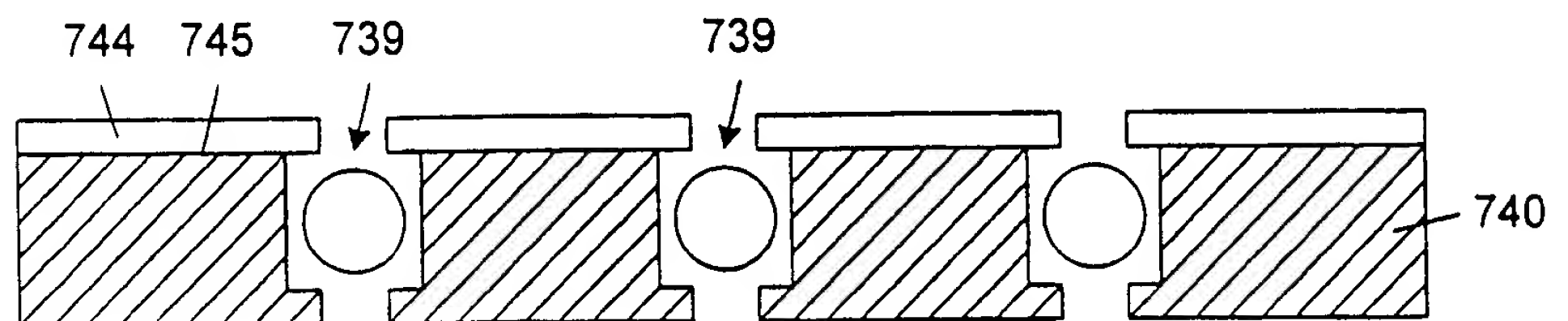


FIG. 26C

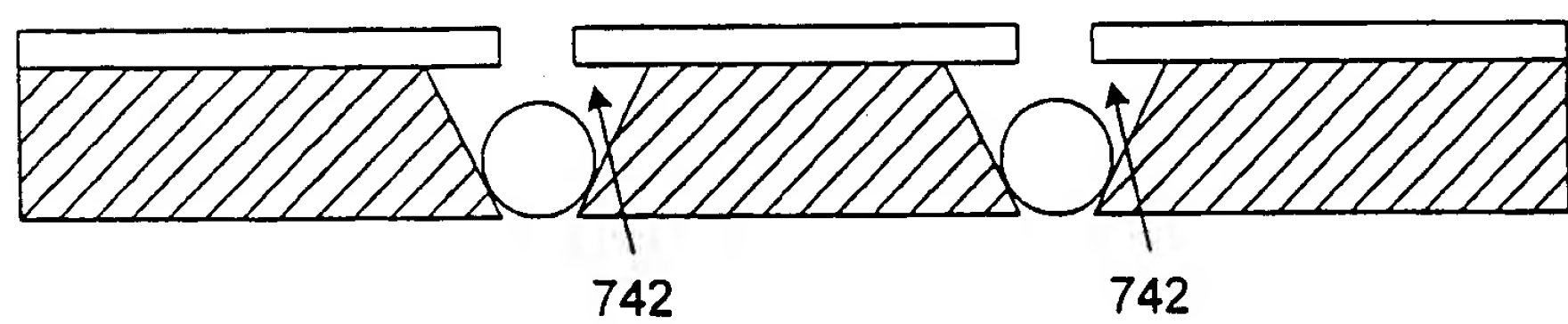


FIG. 26D

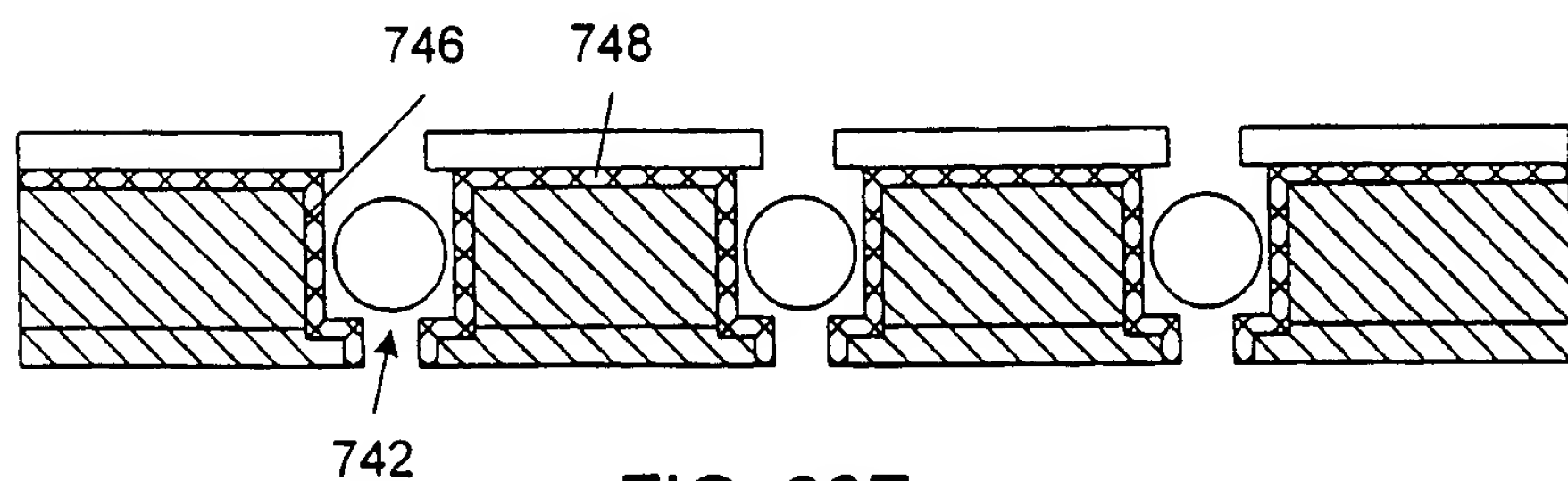


FIG. 26E

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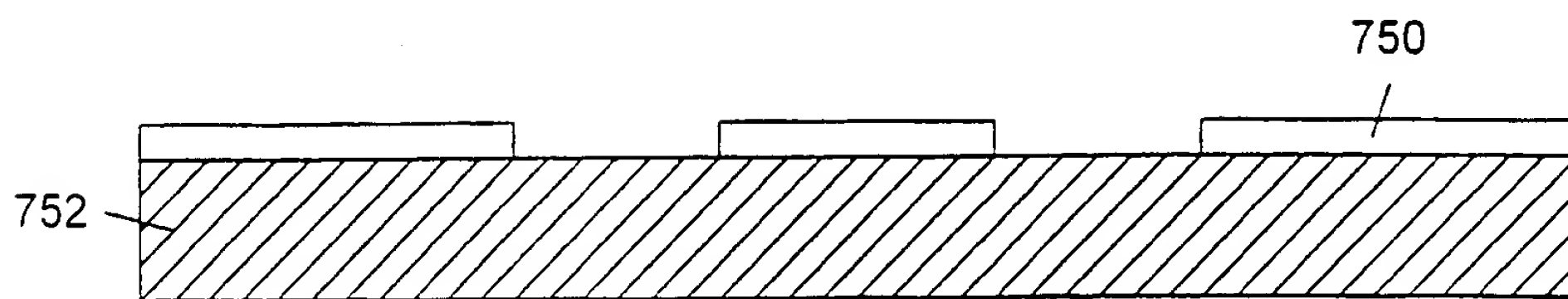


FIG. 27A

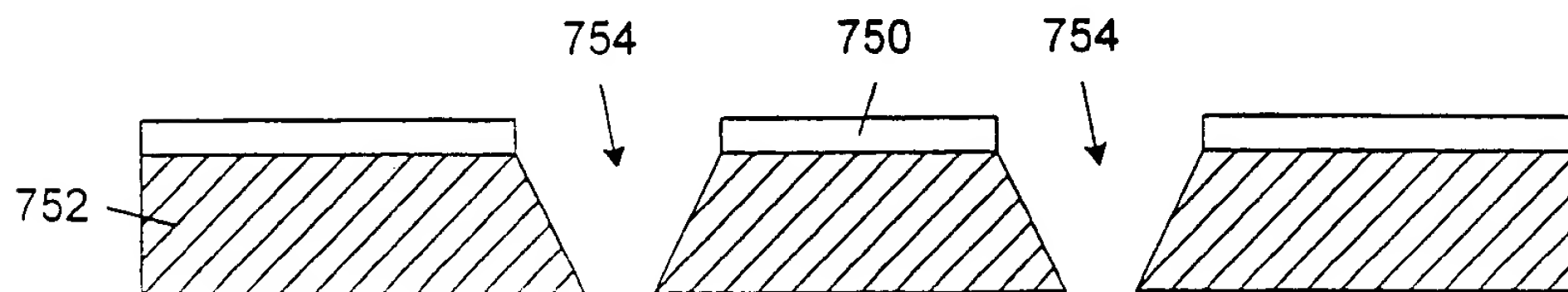


FIG. 27B

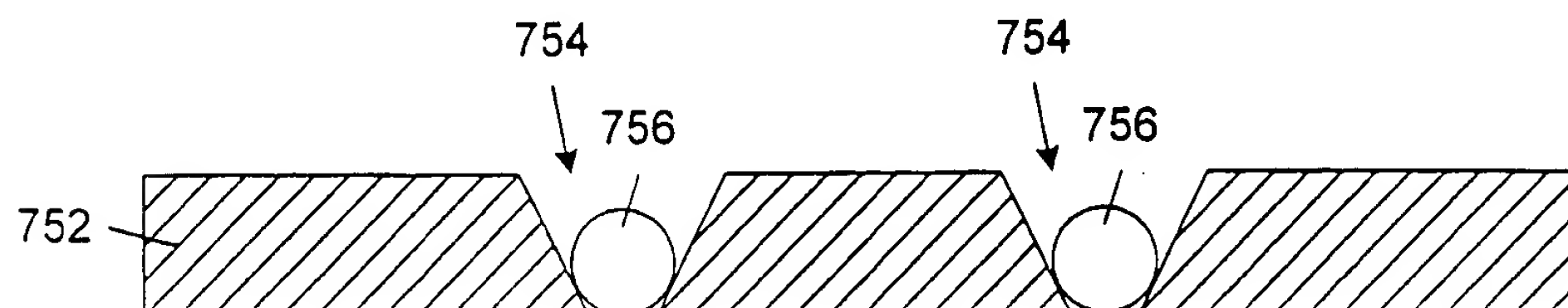


FIG. 27C

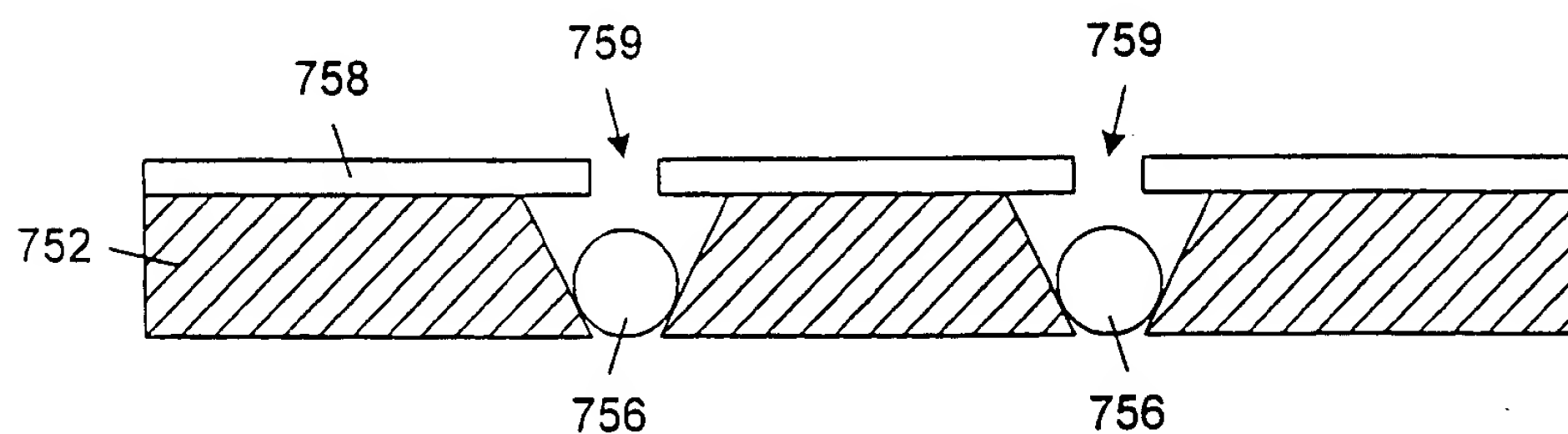


FIG. 27D

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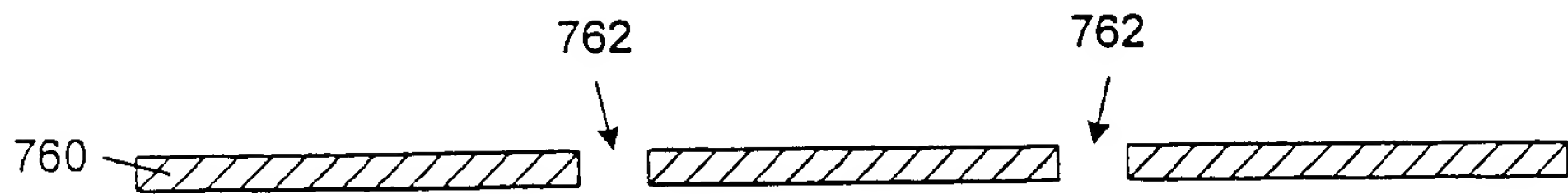


FIG. 28A

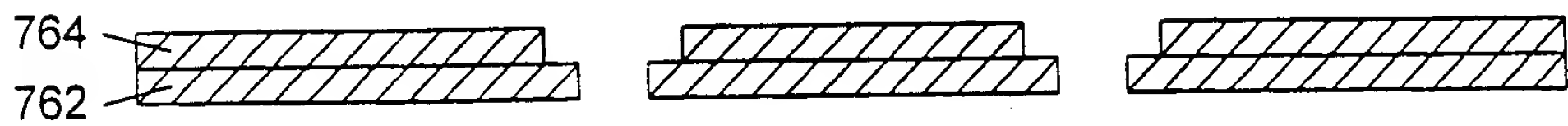


FIG. 28B

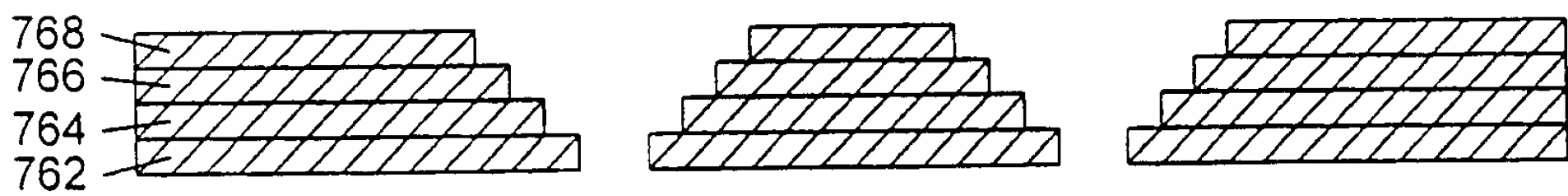


FIG. 28C

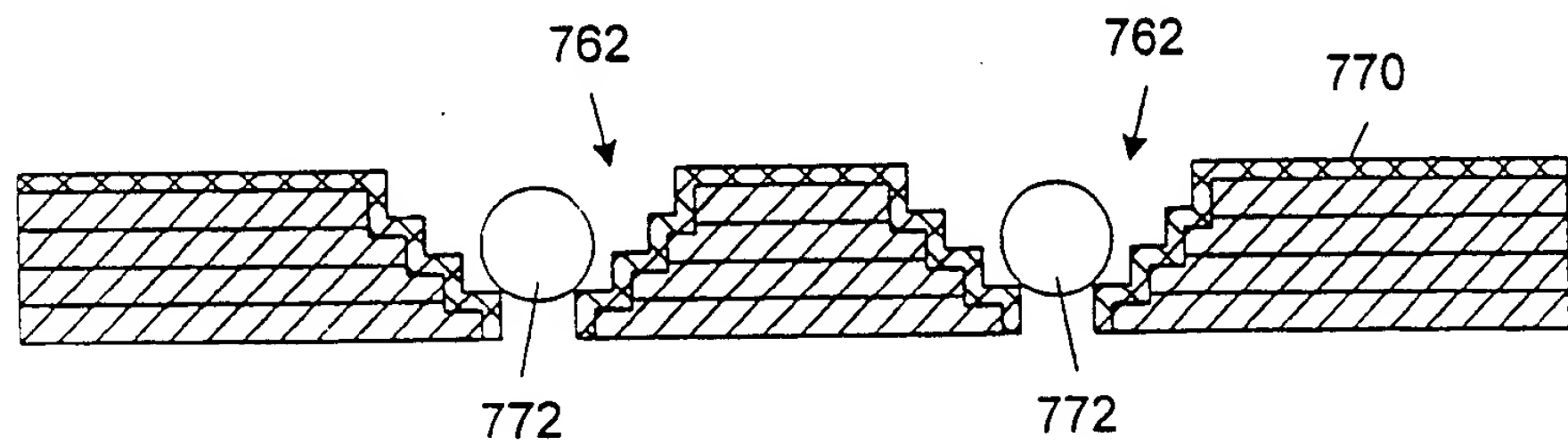


FIG. 28D

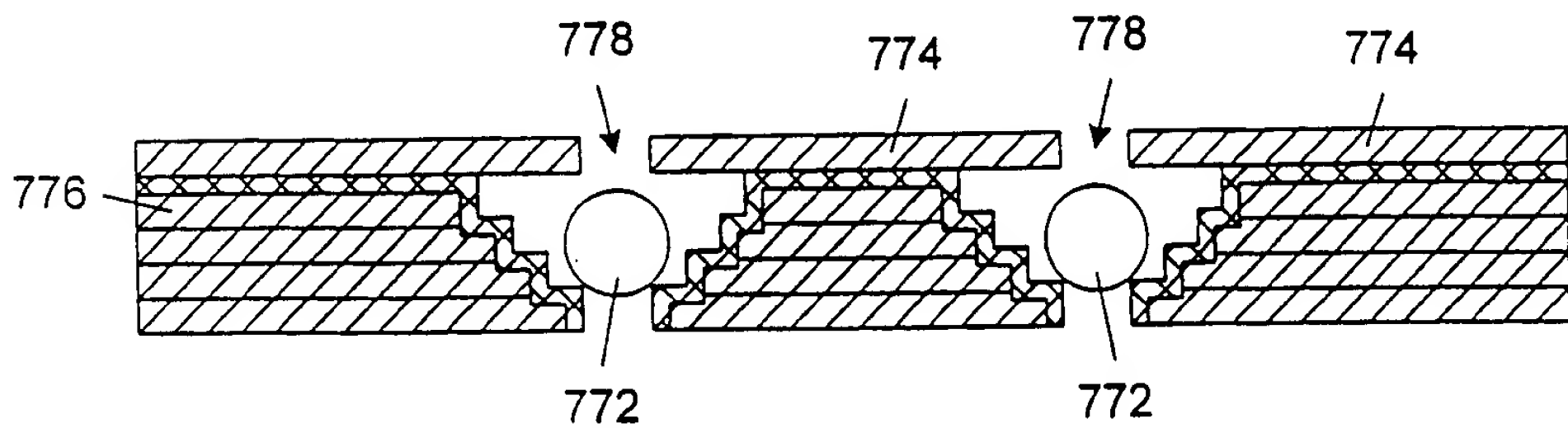


FIG. 28E

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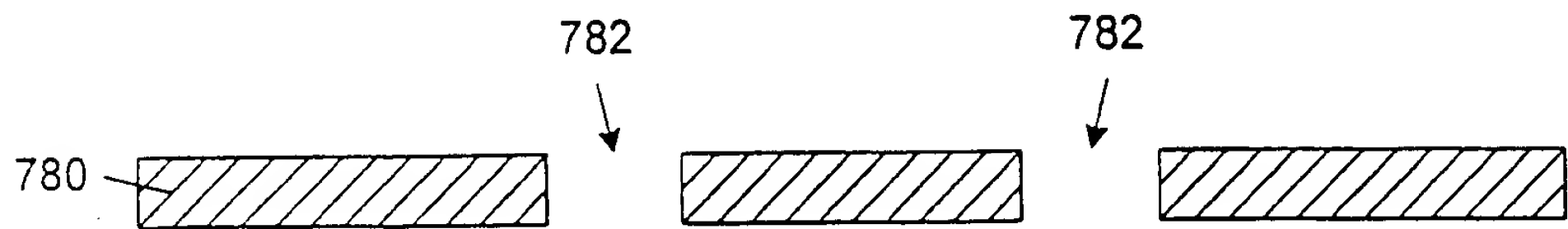


FIG. 29A

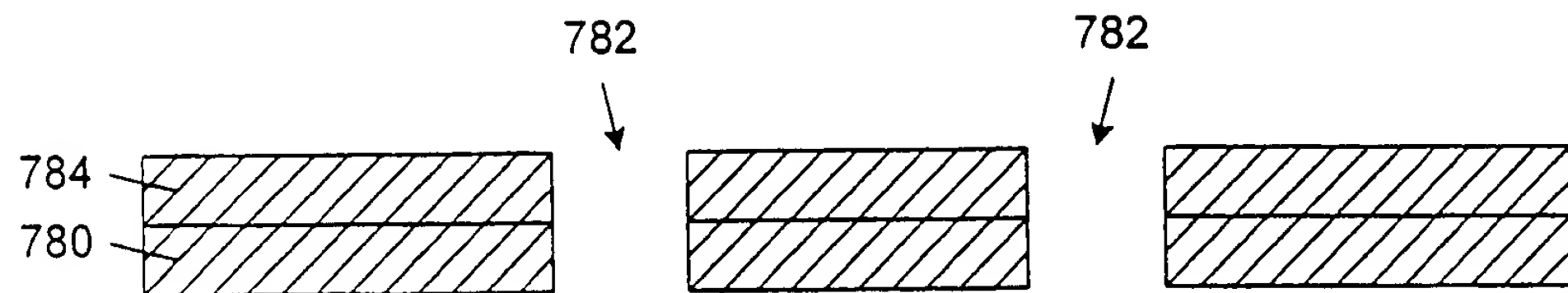


FIG. 29B

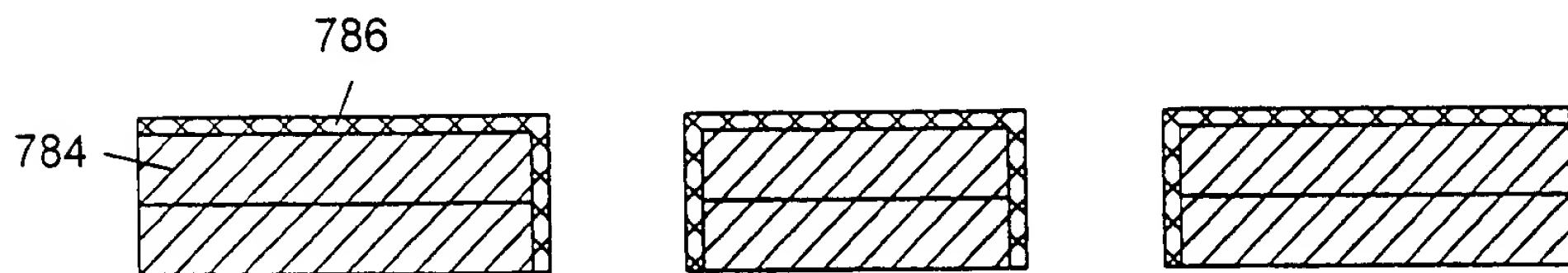


FIG. 29C

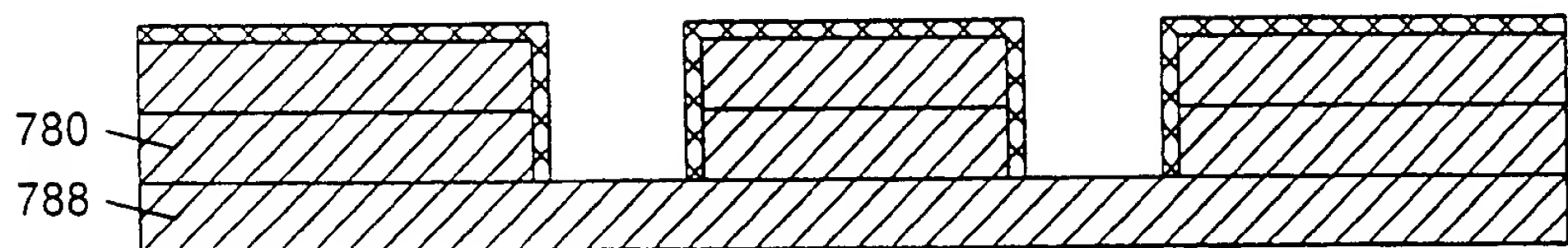


FIG. 29D

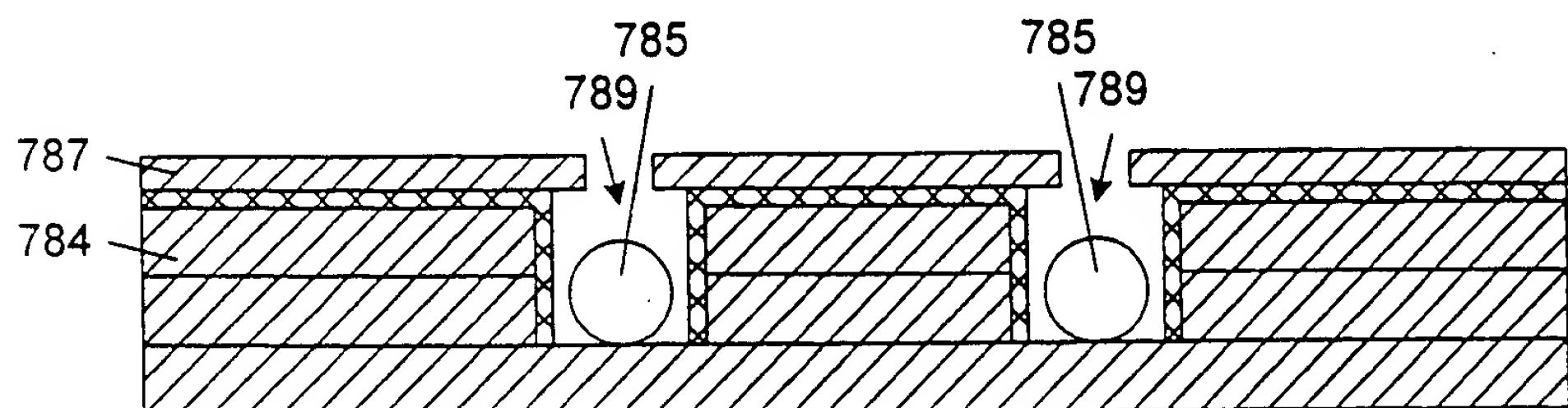


FIG. 29E

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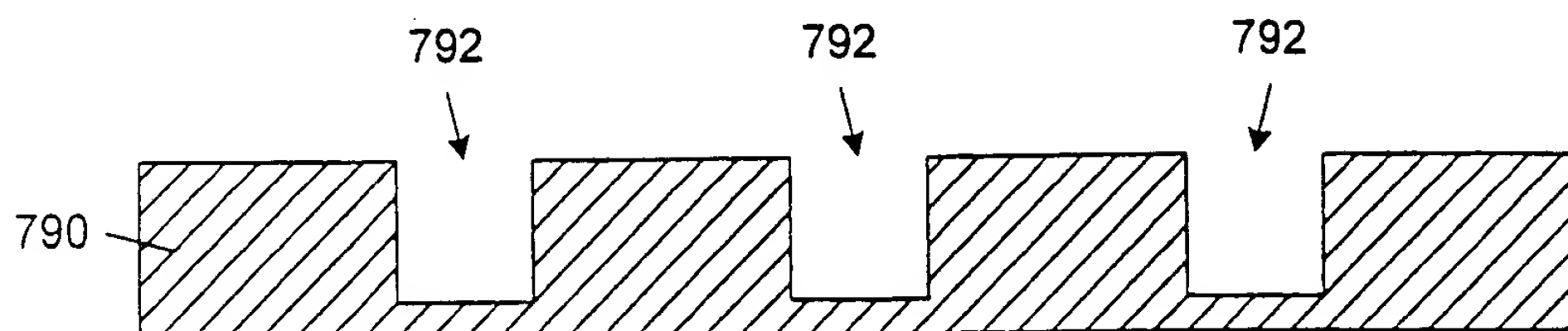


FIG. 30A

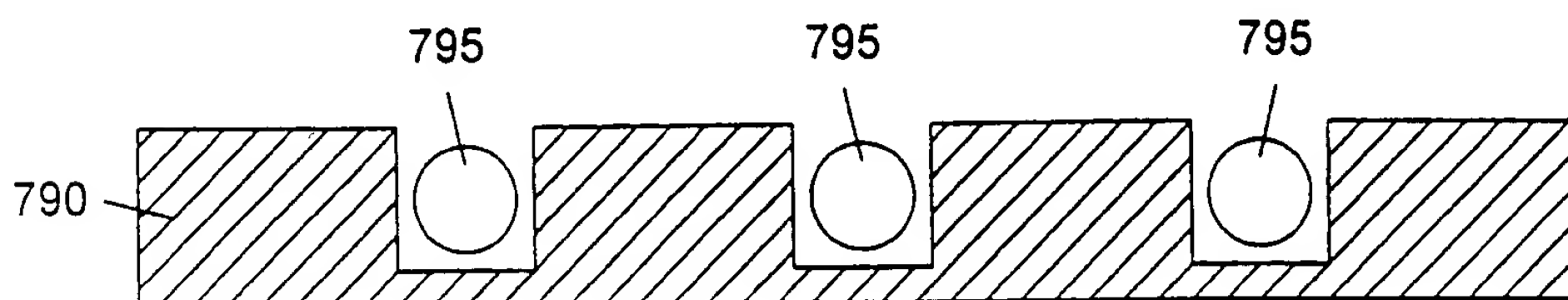


FIG. 30B

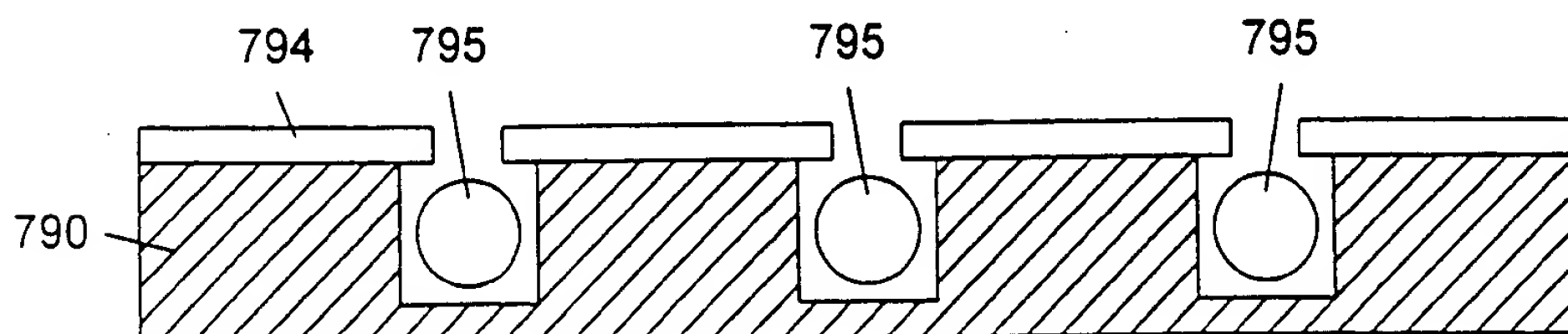


FIG. 30C

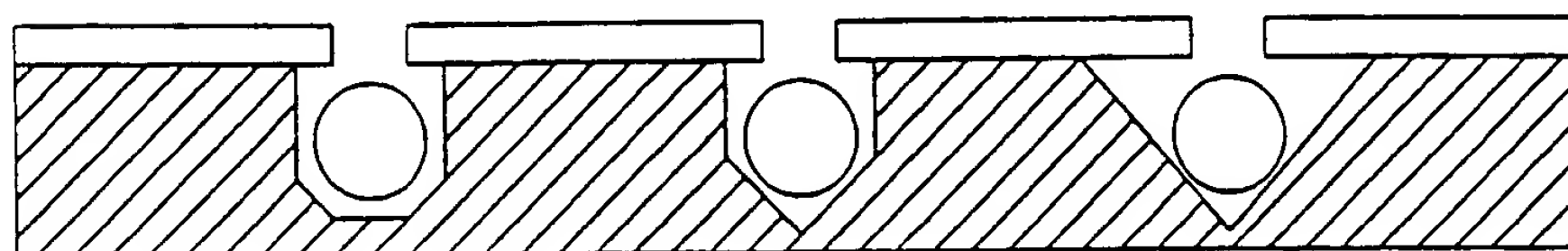


FIG. 30D

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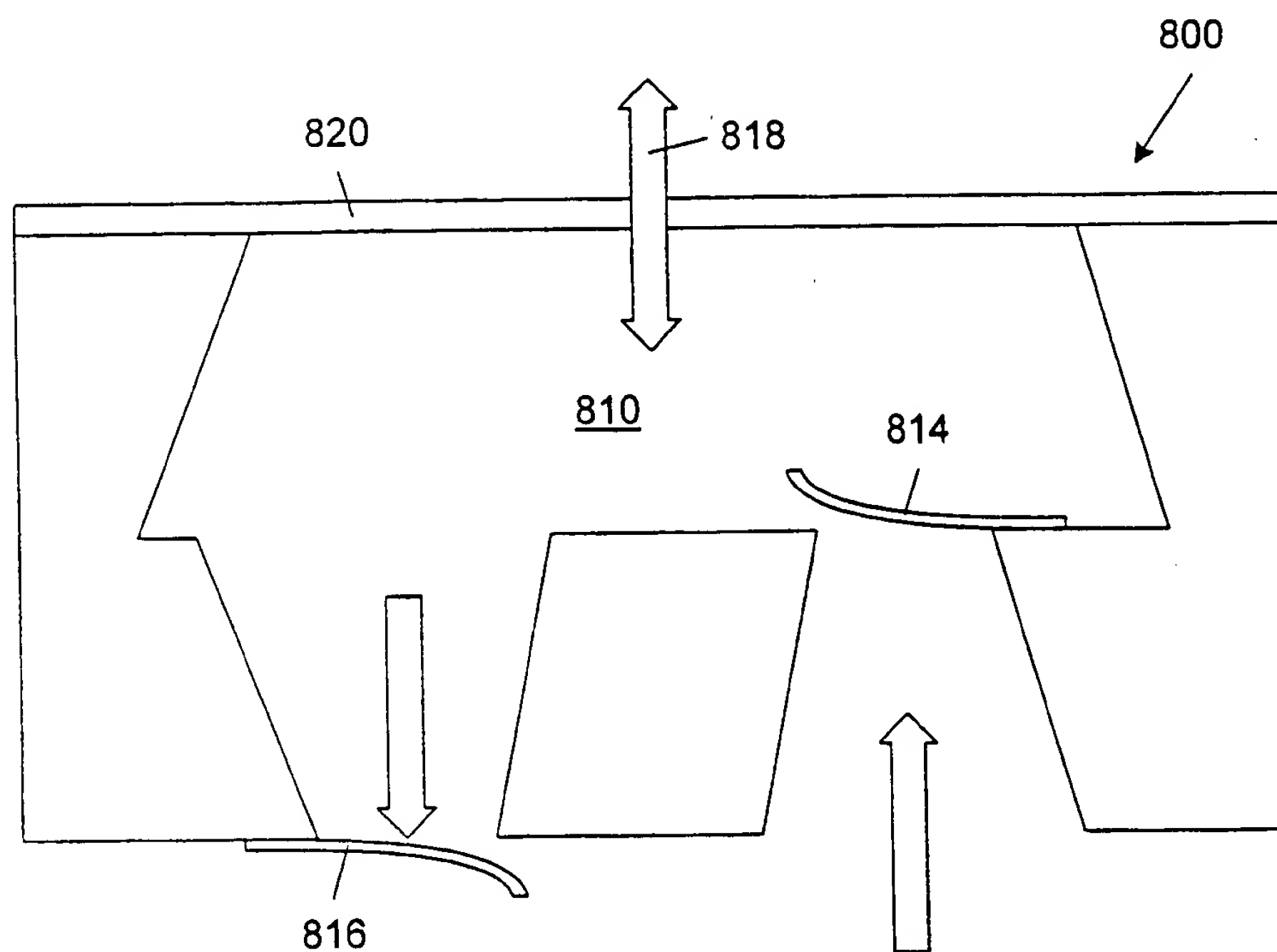


FIG. 31

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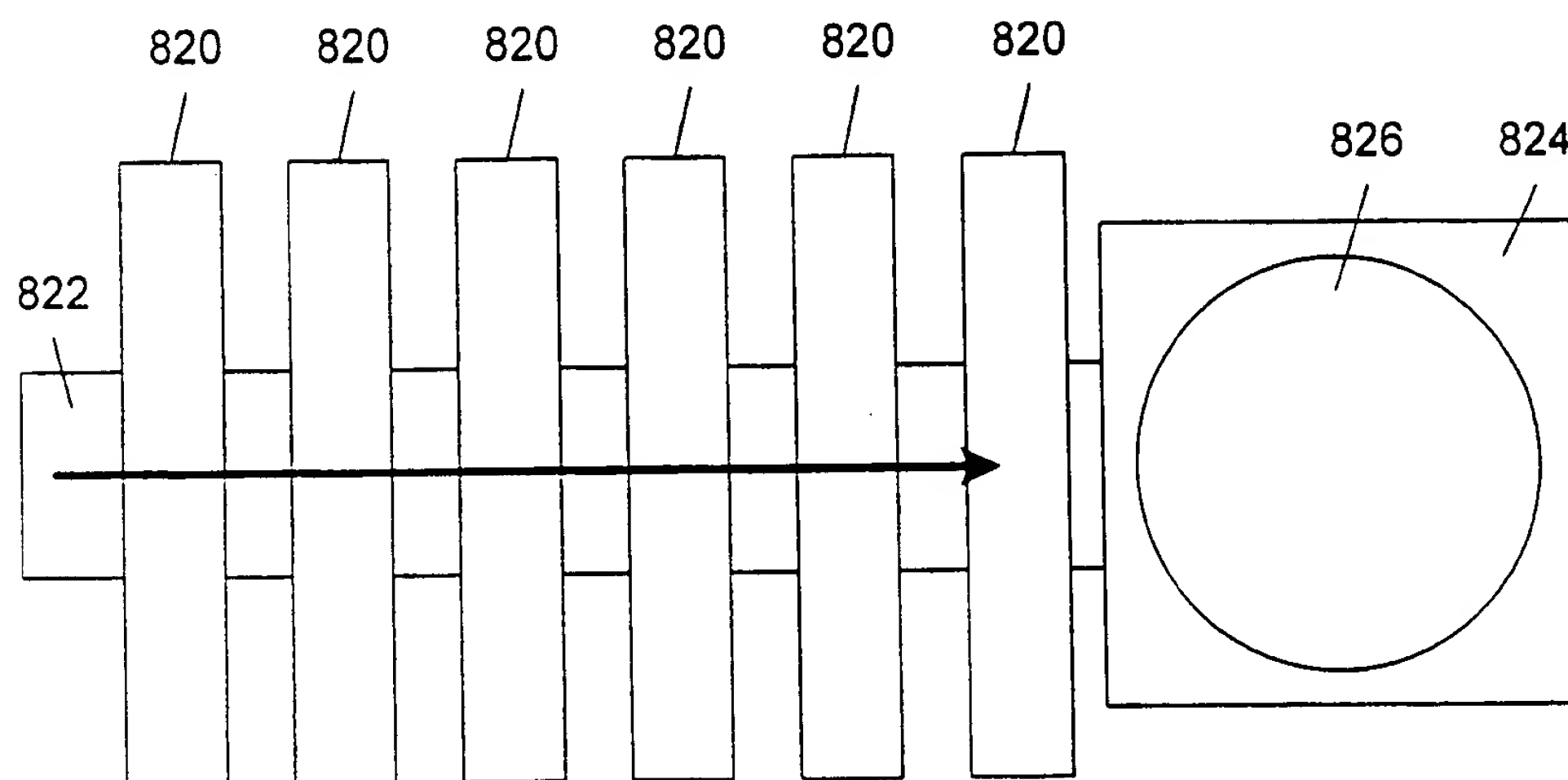


FIG. 32

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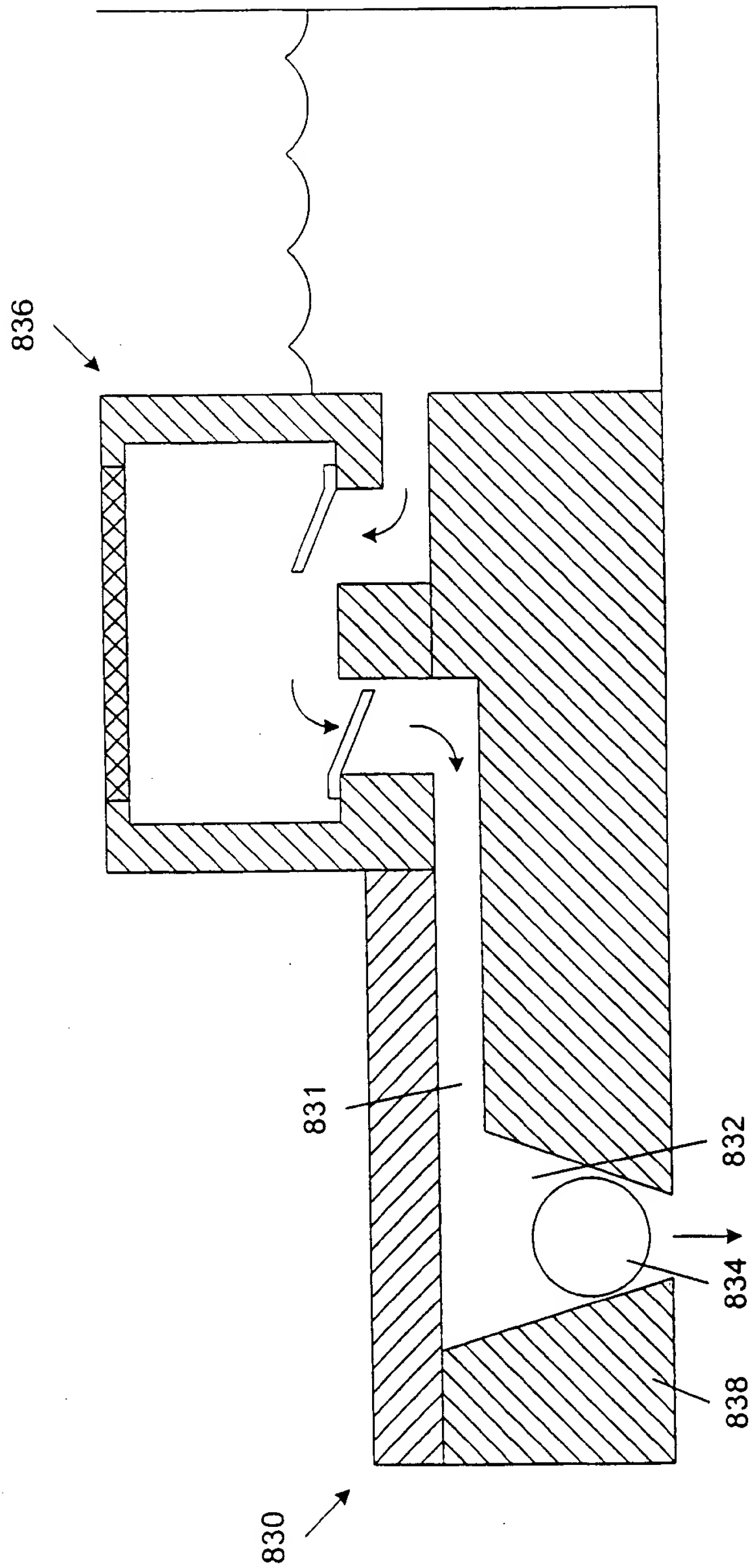
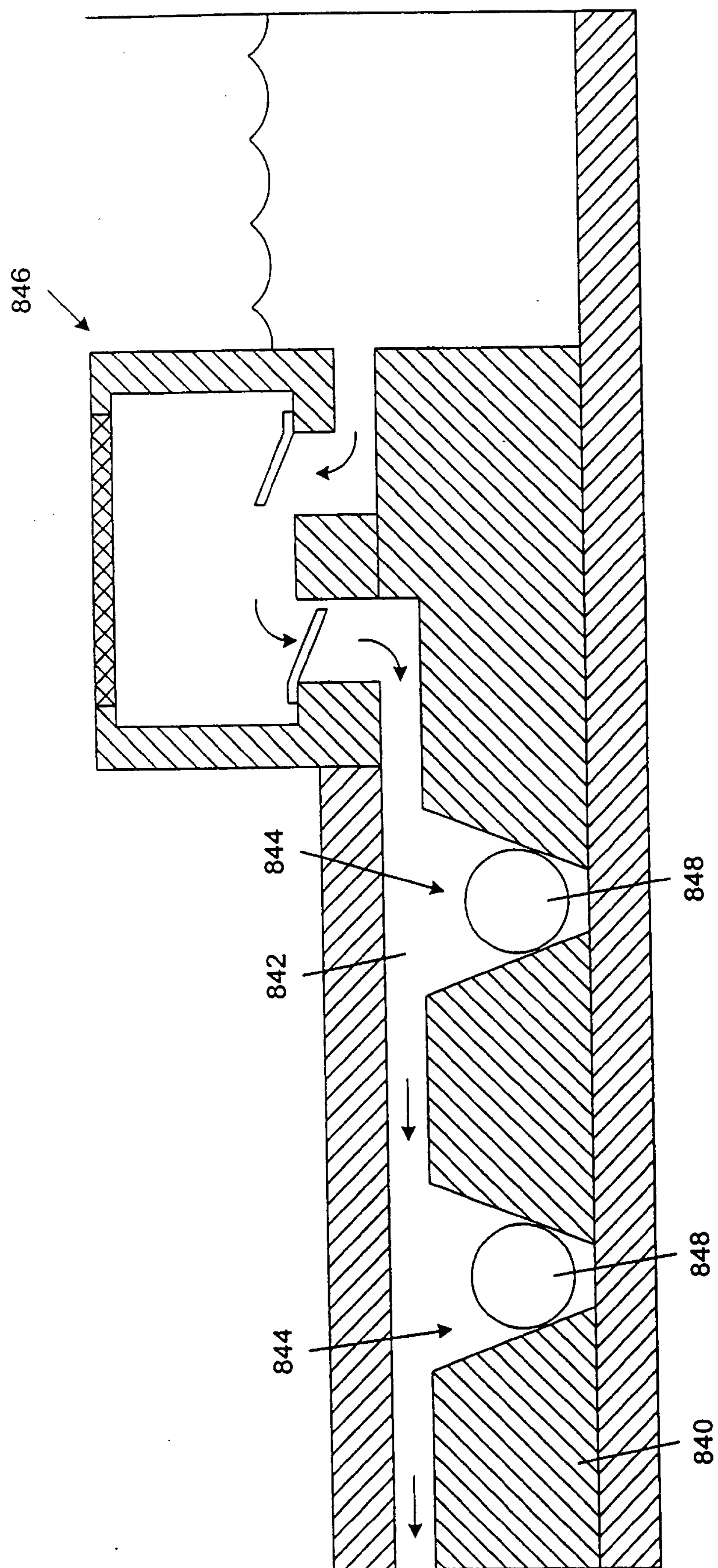


FIG. 33



SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

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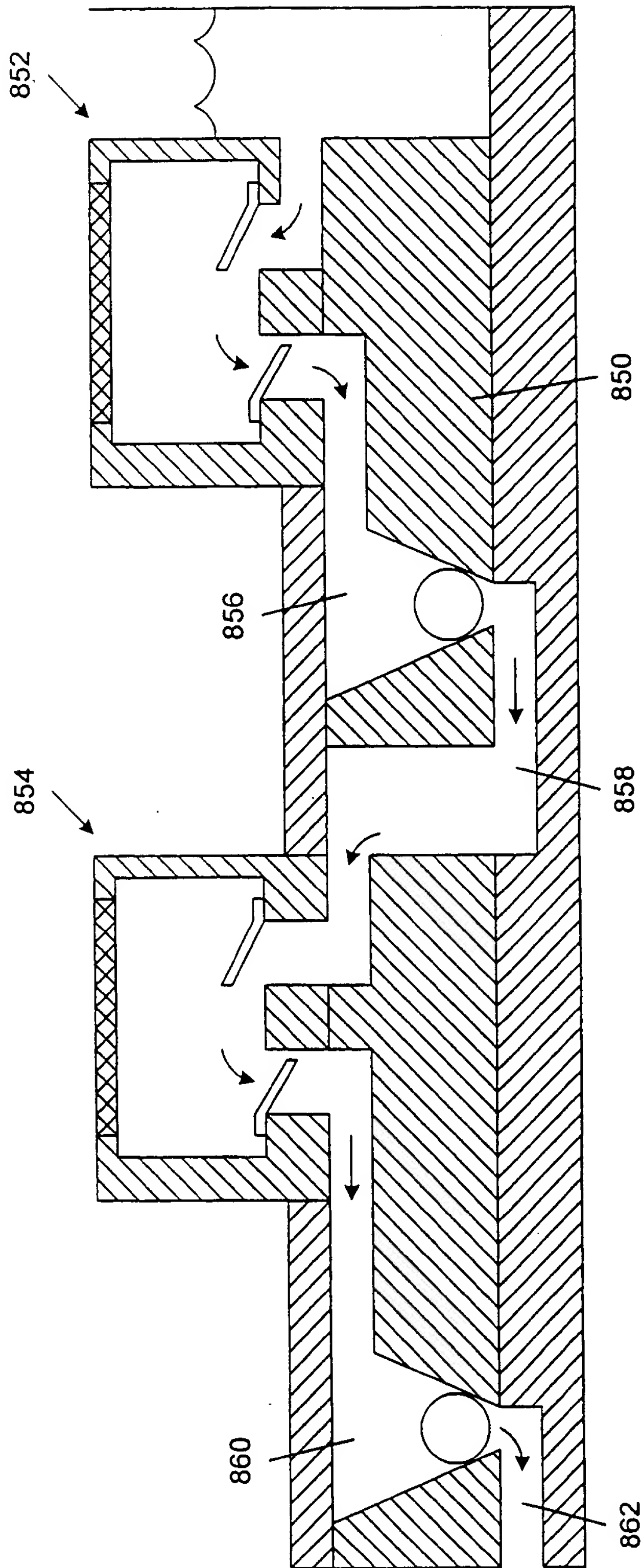


FIG. 35

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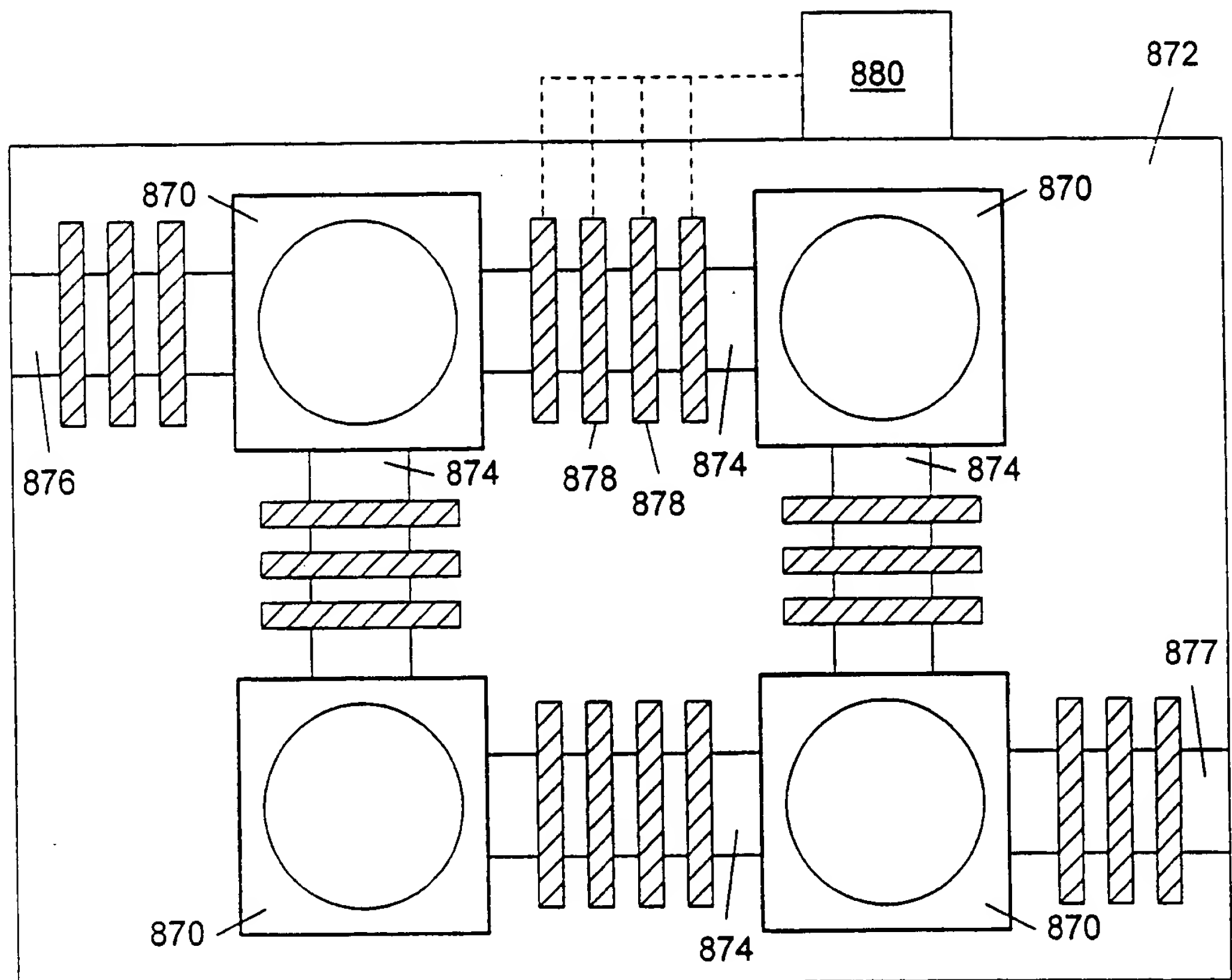


FIG. 36

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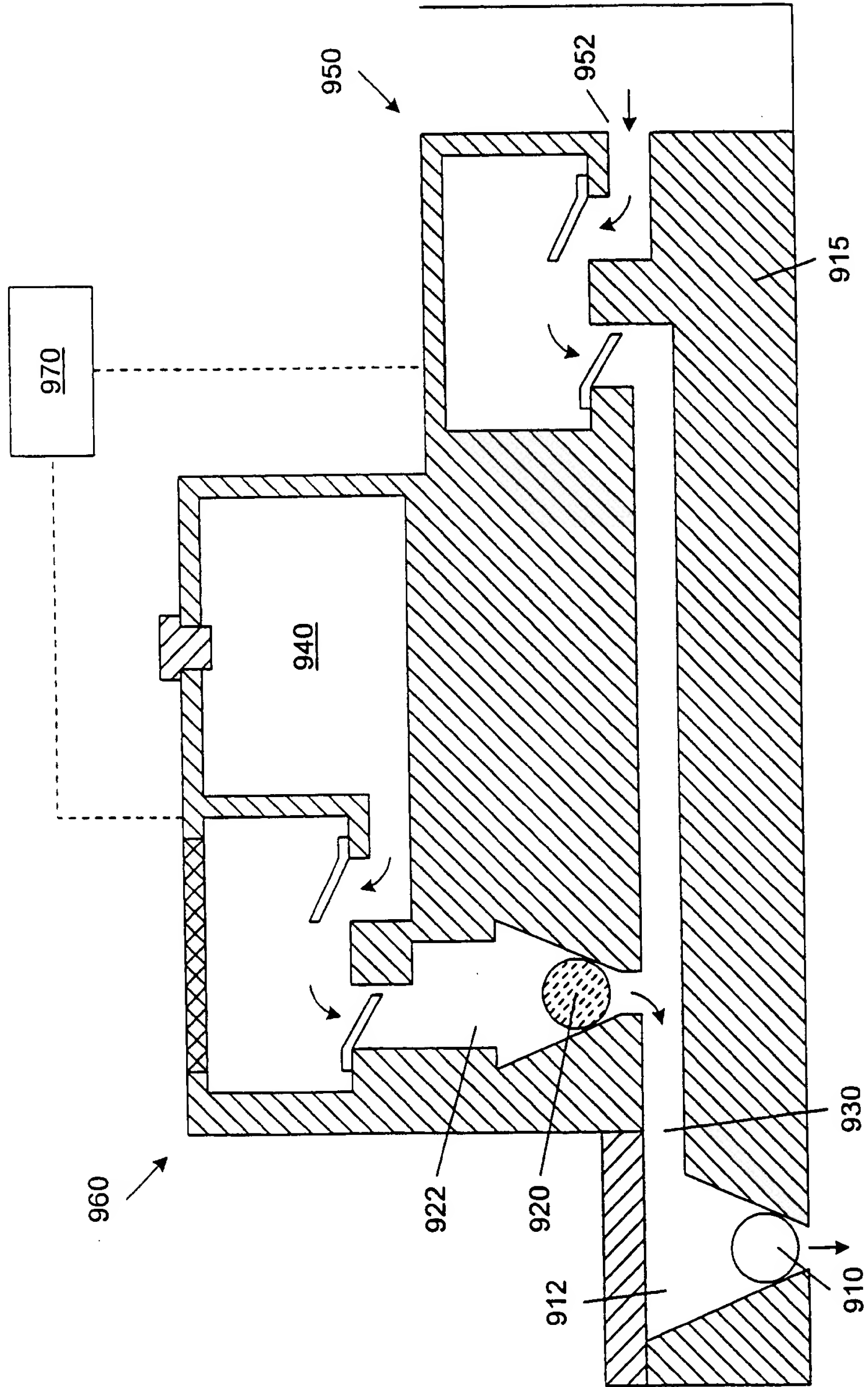


FIG. 37

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

F /US 99/16162

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G01N21/64 G01N21/77

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G01N

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No |
|----------|---|---|
| X.P | WO 99 18434 A (TUFTS COLLEGE ;WALT DAVID R (US); DICKINSON TODD A (US)) 15 April 1999 (1999-04-15) page 8, line 28 -page 9, line 7 page 9, line 13 - line 21 page 10, line 23 - line 35 page 11, line 2 - line 4 page 12, line 5 - line 9 page 13, line 8 - line 17 -/-- | 1-5, 10, 11, 14, 16-20, 23-28, 30-33, 35, 36, 38-42, 48, 49, 51-59, 61-64, 66-74, 84, 95, 106-108 |

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"Z" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

18 November 1999

Date of mailing of the international search report

26/11/1999

Name and mailing address of the ISA

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Authorized officer

Navas Montero, E

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 99/16162

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category | Citation of document, with indication where appropriate of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No |
|----------|---|--|
| | <p>page 15, line 11 - line 17</p> <p>page 16, line 31 - line 38</p> <p>page 17, line 16 - line 19</p> <p>page 17, line 23 - line 37</p> <p>page 19, line 9 - line 16</p> <p>page 19, line 24 - line 27</p> <p>page 20, line 22 - line 30</p> <p>page 21, line 3 - line 12</p> <p>page 24, line 6 - line 20</p> <p>page 25, line 24 - line 30</p> <p>page 26, line 12 - line 18</p> <p>page 27, line 2 - line 5</p> <p>page 27, line 6 - line 14</p> <p>page 29, line 16 - line 18</p> <p>page 30, line 31 - line 36</p> <p>table 3</p> <p>page 33, line 10 -page 34, line 2</p> <p>page 36, line 28 - line 34</p> <p>figures 5-8</p> <p>---</p> | |
| X,P | <p>WO 98 53300 A (BRENNER SYDNEY ;LYNX THERAPEUTICS INC (US); BRIDGHAM JOHN (US); CO) 26 November 1998 (1998-11-26)</p> <p>page 2, line 6 - line 29</p> <p>page 3, line 31 - line 36</p> <p>page 5, line 18 - line 33</p> <p>page 6, line 1 - line 5</p> <p>page 6, line 13 - line 17</p> <p>page 7, line 20 - line 23</p> <p>page 7, line 27 - line 31</p> <p>page 10, line 10 - line 14</p> <p>page 11, line 36 -page 12, line 9</p> <p>page 22, line 22 - line 28</p> <p>figures 1-4</p> <p>---</p> | <p>1,6-9, 12,13, 40, 43-47, 50,69, 70,83, 95,96, 105</p> |
| X,P | <p>WO 98 40726 A (TUFTS COLLEGE ;MICHAEL KARRI C (US); WALT DAVID R (US)) 17 September 1998 (1998-09-17)</p> <p>page 5, line 18 - line 31</p> <p>page 6, line 24 - line 27</p> <p>page 7, line 5 - line 15</p> <p>page 19, line 15 -page 20, line 26</p> <p>figures 4-7</p> <p>---</p> <p>-/--</p> | <p>1,69, 84-86, 89, 93-95, 97,100, 101, 106-108</p> |

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

P./US 99/16162

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category | Citation of document, with indication where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No |
|----------|---|-------------------------|
| X | WO 97 35189 A (UNIV WASHINGTON) 25 September 1997 (1997-09-25) page 2, line 19 - line 22 page 9, line 15 - line 18 page 8, line 26 - line 29 page 10, line 19 - line 27 figures 1,4.5 --- | 69,75, 76,81, 103 |
| X,P | PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1999, no. 03, 31 March 1999 (1999-03-31) & JP 10 332593 A (HITACHI LTD), 18 December 1998 (1998-12-18) abstract --- | 95,99, 104 |
| X,P | WO 99 17139 A (CLARK HEATHER ;UNIV MICHIGAN (US); BARKER SUSAN (US); KOPELMAN RAO) 8 April 1999 (1999-04-08) page 3, line 23 -page 4, line 2 page 9, line 20 - line 26 figures 1.3 --- | 1,40,69 |
| X,P | US 5 866 430 A (GROW ANN E) 2 February 1999 (1999-02-02) column 1, line 11 - line 19 column 1, line 36 - line 46 column 18, line 27 - line 50 column 19, line 54 -column 20, line 11 column 20, line 51 - line 57 column 21, line 17 - line 25 column 21, line 52 - line 60 column 43, line 28 - line 56 column 51, line 25 - line 41 figures 1.5.6 ----- | 1,40,95 |

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US 99/ 16162

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.: 115-412
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No PCT/US 99 /16162

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box I.2

Claims Nos.: 115-412

In view of the large number of claims presently on file, which render it difficult, if not impossible, to determine the matter for which protection is sought, the present application fails to comply with the clarity and conciseness requirements of Article 6 PCT (see also Rule 6.1(a) PCT) to such an extent that a meaningful search is impossible. Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the application which do appear to be clear (and concise), namely 1-114.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims, or parts of claims, relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

P.../US 99/16162

| Patent document cited in search report | | Publication date | Patent family member(s) | Publication date |
|---|---|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| WO 9918434 | A | 15-04-1999 | AU 1269599 A | 27-04-1999 |
| WO 9853300 | A | 26-11-1998 | AU 7715598 A | 11-12-1998 |
| WO 9840726 | A | 17-09-1998 | AU 6464898 A | 29-09-1998 |
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| JP 10332593 | A | 18-12-1998 | NONE | |
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| US 5866430 | A | 02-02-1999 | NONE | |